



Islamabad POST

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Pakistan's Credible Daily Newspaper

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Naila 1st Pakistani woman to scala Nanga Parbat

Detailed News On Page-06

EU calls burning of Holy Quran as 'offensive'

Detailed News On Page-07



Dutch King apologizes over Netherlands' role

Detailed News On Page-07



Emergency session held

OIC for steps to curb Islamophobia

Muslim world condemns desecration of Quran in Sweden; Muslims across the world have strongly condemned the desecration of the Holy Quran



RIYADH: OIC Secretary General and Chairman presiding over an emergency meeting to condemn desecration of Holy Quran in Sweden. – DNA

NEWS DESK / DNA

RIYADH: The Organisation of Islamic Cooperation on Sunday said that measures need to be taken to avoid repeated acts of desecration to the Qur'an, Saudi state TV al-Ekhabariya reported. The announcement was made during an emergency session over the repercussions of burning a copy of the Qur'an in Sweden on the first day of Eid Al-Adha, the Saudi Press Agency reported on Saturday. "We must send constant reminders to the international community regarding the urgent application of international law, which clearly prohibits any advocacy of religious hatred," OIC Secretary-General Hissein Brahim Taha said. The meeting, held at the OIC's headquarters in Jeddah, was called following an invitation from Saudi Arabia – the chairman of the Islamic Summit in its current session and the OIC's Executive Committee. There has been widespread outrage and condemnation in the Muslim and Arab world since Salwan Momika, 37, a refugee from Iraq, desecrated the Qur'an and set fire to its pages in front of Stockholm's largest mosque on Wednesday. The "meeting is scheduled to discuss measures against these despicable acts to express a united position against the desecration of the Holy Qur'an," the statement said. The OIC warned of the seriousness of these acts, which undermine mutual respect and harmony among peoples and contradict international efforts to spread the values of tolerance, moderation and rejection of extremism. Muslims across the world have strongly condemned the desecration of the Holy Quran in Sweden's capital during a protest authorised by the police. Pakistan, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Iraq,

Info Minister condemns Quran desecration

DNA

PESHAWAR: Information Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Barrister Feroz Jamal Shah Kakakhel on Sunday expressed strong condemnation over the desecration of the Holy Quran in Sweden. In a statement issued here, the minister said, "The heinous act has deeply wounded the sentiments of the entire Muslim Ummah." He said that the federal government should strongly protest at the diplomatic level. "The desecration of the Holy Quran is an act of global terrorism that inflicts harm on the emotions of the entire Muslim ummah," said Barrister Feroz Jamal Shah Kakakhel.

ecrated the Qur'an and set fire to its pages in front of Stockholm's largest mosque on Wednesday. The "meeting is scheduled to discuss measures against these despicable acts to express a united position against the desecration of the Holy Qur'an," the statement said. The OIC warned of the seriousness of these acts, which undermine mutual respect and harmony among peoples and contradict international efforts to spread the values of tolerance, moderation and rejection of extremism. Muslims across the world have strongly condemned the desecration of the Holy Quran in Sweden's capital during a protest authorised by the police. Pakistan, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Iraq,

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TOKYO: Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari interacts with a number of Japanese business executives and representatives of JICA and JETRO. – DNA

Islamabad, Rawalpindi at risk of urban flooding

Met Office forecasts monsoon rains from today

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: Twin cities – Islamabad and Rawalpindi – could face urban flooding as monsoon rains – from July 3 to 8 – are likely to begin in the country from Monday, Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) said Sunday. PMD, also known as the Met Office, said in a statement that moist currents from the Arabian Sea are likely to penetrate in upper parts of the country, and a westerly wave is also likely to enter the upper parts of the country from July 3. The rains may cause urban flooding in low-lying areas of Islamabad, Rawalpindi, Peshawar, Gujranwala, and Lahore from July 4-7, the Met Office said, as it

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FM stresses on increased Pak-Japan trade ties

The FM said both countries can benefit from investment in agriculture and livestock

DNA

TOKYO: Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari says Pakistan and Japan have the potential to increase bilateral trade in diverse sectors for mutual benefit. He was speaking at a function organized by the Pakistani diaspora in Tokyo today (Sunday). The Foreign Minister said both countries can benefit from investment in agriculture and livestock. Bilawal Bhutto Zardari said incumbent government is working on economic diplomacy to bring prosperity in the country. He said Pakistan can learn from Japan's advancement in Information Technology and other fields. The Foreign Minister said during his meeting with Japanese leadership and entrepreneurs, he will urge them to enhance trade and investment in Pakistan. He said Pakistan has over sixty five percent populations of youth and we can exploit this human resource through skills based education and training.

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PM summons cabinet session

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has summoned the federal cabinet session on Monday (tomorrow), citing sources. PM Shehbaz Sharif summoned the federal cabinet's session on Monday in which the participants will review the political and economic situation of the country. Sources divulged on Saturday that the meeting will also cover the issue of extending the stay of Afghan refugees in Pakistan. The Afghan refugees' two-year extension had ended on June 30. While the Home Ministry has advocated for an additional six-month extension.

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Briefs

Shujaat meets Elahi in jail

BUREAU REPORT

LAHORE: In a bid to convince Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) President Parvez Elahi – who has been lingering in prison since June 1 in connection with multiple cases registered against him – to return to the fort of Pakistan Muslim League-Quaid (PML-Q), the party's head and his cousin Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain met the incarcerated leader in Camp Jail, Lahore on Sunday, sources revealed. According to the well-placed sources, Shujaat's son Chaudhry Salik Hussain and his brother Chaudhry Wajahat Hussain were also present during the meeting.

Four jawans martyred in Balochistan attack

The martyred officials have been identified as station house officer Bahadur Khan, Babar, sepoy Afzal Shirani and Baz Khan Harifal

DNA

QUETTA: An Frontier Constabulary check-post was attacked by terrorists in the Dhana Sar area of Shirani district in Balochistan. Reportedly, one FC and three police personnel have been martyred in the attack, as per security officials. The martyred officials have been identified as station house officer Bahadur Khan, Babar, sepoy Afzal Shirani and Baz Khan Harifal. One terrorist was also killed in an exchange of fire, they said further. The officials said an exchange of fire between the security forces and terrorists is going on. According to the Shirani deputy commissioner, the attack took place at the joint check-post of the police, Levies and FC forces early in the morning. A search operation in the area is underway. The Balochistan chief minister's spokesperson, Babar Yousufzai, has condemned the Shirani terrorist attack. The terrorists want to destroy the law and order situation with this cowardly attack, he remarked. He said no concession will be

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3 terrorists killed in DI Khan

NEWS DESK

RAWALPINDI: On 02 July 23, security forces conducted an Intelligence Based Operation in general area Kulachi, DI Khan District. During the conduct of operation, after intense fire exchange, three terrorists were sent to hell. Weapons and ammunition were also recovered from the killed terrorists. The killed terrorists remained actively involved in various terrorist activities against security forces, Police and innocent civilians. They were also highly wanted for conducting a raid on a Police CP in Kulachi on 11 April 2022, which resulted in Shahadat of five brave police constables. Sanitization of the area is being carried out to eliminate any terrorists found in the area. Security Forces of Pakistan are determined to eliminate the menace of terrorism

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Islamophobia in Sweden

Sweden adopted multicultural policy following World War II, in response to an inflow of refugees

COMMENT

QAMAR BASHIR

WHEN Sweden authorized Salwan Momika to burn a copy of the Holy Quran in front of the Stockholm Mosque on June 26th, 2023, under police protection, worldwide outcry poured in. The extremist's provocative behavior coincided with Eid al-Adha, one of the largest Islamic religious festivals observed by Muslims around the world. The Islamic world, including Pakistan, Turkey, Jordan, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, Morocco, Iraq, Iran, Senegal, Morocco, and Mauritania, condemned the "crime" of burning a Quran copy. The United States, for its part, branded the behavior as "deeply disrespectful". However, this was an isolated phenomenon, the Sweden animosity for Islam dates back to the 16th and 17th centuries, when the Swedish Empire

expanded along with its military prowess and dangerous religious doctrines. It was a Catholic kingdom at first, but after abolishing Catholicism in 1665, it became a Protestant country in the 16th century. Muslims were compared with Catholics by the Swedish monarchs, who labeled them as uneducated and adversaries of the "true Christian religion." Following the civil war, the empire lost territory and financial dominance, with the Ottoman Empire rising politically, militarily, and, most importantly, religiously. To keep the Ottomans at bay, the Swedish government was forced to make concessions to them, allowing Muslims and Jews to practice their faith within Sweden. This forced tolerance lasted until the nineteenth century, when Sweden regained political, economical, and military strength. The Social Democratic Party, which was founded to unite Sweden and promote nationalism, laid the groundwork for Orientalist studies, which are defined as "a Western

style for dominating, restructuring, embodying, and producing a stereotypical view of Islam and the Eastern world, depicting the religion as inferior to the Swedes' Christianity." Sweden adopted multicultural policy following World War II, in response to an inflow of refugees. Nonetheless, several religions, particularly Islam, were portrayed more poorly than the dominant framework. According to a 1990 study, 65% of Swedish people had negative views toward Muslims, 2% had positive feelings, and the rest were indecisive. Approximately 88% of Swedes who rejected Islam stated that practicing Islam was incompatible with democracy. In addition, 62% of Swedes equate the Islamic veil, or hijab, with female tyranny. An surge in Islamophobic hate crimes demonstrates how misinformation has spread following the September 11, 2001, attacks.

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TURKISH AIRLINES

BEST PART OF THE JOURNEY

Stopover IN ISTANBUL

EASY VISA

FOR UNITED KINGDOM, IRELAND, USA, SCHENGEN PASSENGERS

A STAR ALLIANCE MEMBER

Economy

FREE ACCOMMODATION

FOR UNITED KINGDOM, IRELAND, USA, SCHENGEN PASSENGERS

Business

Dacoit killed in encounter with police

LAHORE: A dacoit was killed and another was injured in an encounter between the Sadar police and robbers in Manga Mandi area and tried to arrest two alleged dacoits - Shahid Ali and Abrar. Seeing the police team, the accused opened fire on the police party. The police also returned the fire. In exchange of fire, Shahid Ali was killed and Abrar was seriously injured. The police arrested Abrar in injured condition. The deceased was wanted to the police in several cases of murder, attempted murder and robbery. The accused had shot at and injured Constable Nadeem at Investigation Chung Section on Saturday. The police are conducting raids for arrest of other accomplices.—APP

Commissioner monitors cleanliness operation

LAHORE: Lahore Divisional Commissioner Muhammad Ali Randhawa on Thursday visited Punjab Safe City Authority (PSCA) offices to monitor ongoing cleanliness operation in the provincial capital. According to official sources here, the commissioner issued directions to the cleanliness field formation with the help of cameras. As per the direction of the commissioner vehicles reached Dubai Chowk, Railway Crossing Cantt, Sitara Colony, Kamah, Ijtama Qurbanigah Nishtar zone to lift offalls. The commissioner said that purpose of monitoring the cleaning operation was to ensure best and timely cleanliness, adding that citizens should contact helpline 1139 for timely removal of offalls. He said that city would be kept clean through collective efforts.—APP

Nasir Shah lauds efforts of LG representatives on Eidul Adha

KARACHI: Sindh Minister for Local Government (LG) Syed Nasir Hussain Shah while appreciating the efforts of all elected local government representatives of PPP and other parties on Eid-ul-Azha, said on Sunday that the enthusiasm and passion of all local body representatives for public service was praise worthy. He said that the Sindh government believed in support and cooperation of all the elected local body representatives, who had the passion to serve the people. He said that Solid Waste and Management along with elected local government representatives made possible efforts to provide relief to the people. Nasir Shah said that all the local bodies representatives should be active in their respective areas until the garbage and complete cleaning. He said that arrangements should be made to immediately remove the garbage from the areas. The Minister said that the people should register their complaints on solid waste management helpline number 1128 regarding waste and sanitation. He said that action would be taken against the officers concerned, who did not address public complaints.—APP

IMF financing good but reforms must to end economic crisis

NAZIR SYAL

KARACHI: The Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry's Businessmen Panel (BMP) has termed the agreement with IMF as a positive development for the economy but warned that the multilateral donors financing might not bring any significant impact on struggling economy, as the sustainable solution to Pakistan's economic issues lies in the structural reforms and consistent policies. FPCCI former president and BMP Chairman Mian Anjum Nisar said the deal would end speculation of a possible default, but the country's debt troubles won't end there, as the more IMF aid will be needed in 2024, he added. He said that the rupee will strengthen which will reduce inflation, so, the IMF agreement is overall a good development. The BMP Chairman



ISLAMABAD: Youngsters are taking photo graphs with "Golden Man" at Daman-e-Koh durring celebrations on the last vacation of the Eid-ul-Adha, in Federal Capital.—Online

RCCI applauds SBA with IMF crucial for economic stability

STAFF REPORT

RAWALPINDI: Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) has termed that Stand-By Arrangement (SBA) with International Monetary Fund (IMF) crucial for economic stability and a welcome news for Pakistan's ailing economy. The yield will not only send a positive message to investors, but the risk of default has also been averted, said RCCI Presi-

dent Saqib Rafiq. He also applauds PM office and Finance Ministry engagements with IMF and after their tireless efforts, Pakistan managed to secure IMF deal. Saqib Rafiq further remarked that the SBA of \$3 billion will not only provide a breathing space in the recovery of Pakistan's creditworthiness but also enable the resumption of dollar inflow from various bilateral



and multilateral lenders. He said in a statement that the business community hopes that the industry reforms introduced by the government in the budget including the five exports sectors to increase tax net and increase exports will be implemented. The framework for development of five Es, Energy, E-Pakistan, environment, equity and empowerment will be shared with the business

community and stakeholders will be taken on board, he added. Chamber President Saqib Rafiq said that the government should improve financial management and discipline. Give preference to lesser-known and nonconventional sectors to increase exports. He said that the Chamber has also submitted a nine-point economic plan to the Ministry of Finance and FBR in its budget proposals.

Punishment for 2014 sit-in could have prevented May 9

DNA

MURIDKE: Calling Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf a bunch of rogue and mischievous people, Federal Minister for Education Rana Tanvir Hussain said on Sunday that had the party leaders been penalized for attacking parliament and Pakistan Television (PTV) buildings back in 2014, incidents of violence on May 9 could have been prevented.

Addressing a function held under the auspices of PML-N in Muridke tehsil of Sheikhpura, the minister said it was Pakistan's bad luck that the PML-N government did not take action against the PTI during the sit-in of 2014. "Those burning electricity bills and exhorting people to resort to civil disobedience can never be the country's well-wishers," Hussain said. He was of the view that what happened on May 9 was un-

precedented. "There is no country in the world where people attack their own country's army," he opined. He called for giving tough penalties to those involved in the vandalism and arson of government and military installations on May 9. He asked the PML-N workers to start election campaign with a new vigour. "The party supremo Nawaz Sharif will soon be amongst you and will lead the campaign," the minister claimed.

Rescue-1122 responded to 22,725 emergencies

LAHORE: Rescue-1122 responded to 22,725 emergencies in all districts of Punjab during the Eid holidays. Provincial monitoring officer informed the secretary emergency services that the Eid days emergencies included 6,460 road traffic crashes with 45 deaths, 12,693 medical emergencies with 430 deaths, 37 drowning emergencies with 28 deaths, 225 fire emergencies, 635 delivery emergencies, 463 fall and slipping cases with four deaths, 228 cases of electric shock, 345 occupational injuries, 44 burn cases, eight structural cases, 701 miscellaneous emergencies and 242 animal rescue operations.

While chairing zoom meeting of all district emergency officers, the secretary appreciated the rescuers over their duty during the Eid holidays. The monitoring officer said the highest number of emergencies took place in Lahore with 3,015 emergencies, followed by Faisalabad with 1,444 emergencies, Multan with 1,244 emergencies, Gujranwala with 1,064 emergencies, Bahawalpur with 1,055 emergencies and lowest number of 198 emergencies happened in Chakwal. The Sahiwal district emergency officer informed the meeting about a road crash in which seven injured and one body were shifted to hospital. Jhelum officer said six people drowned in two separate drowning emergencies and their bodies were successfully recovered through rescue operation.—APP

Punjab govt claims cardiology facilities continue on Sehat card

LAHORE: Punjab's caretaker Information Minister Amir Mir has firmly rejected the termination of cardiology facilities on the Sehat card, ensuring uninterrupted access to these services for patients. Addressing a press conference along with caretaker health minister Dr Javed Akram, he said there is no truth in the news of stopping heart treatment on Sehat Card. This announcement comes in response to the recent 'rumors' that the Punjab government has suspended heart ailment treatment on the health card. Media reports had highlighted that an insurance company associated with the Sehat Card scheme issued a notification stating the cessation of all treatment provisions at private hospitals across the province. According to the notification, heart patients would no longer be eligible for any form of treatment covered by the health card at private healthcare facilities. Refusing to halt treatment through the health card, Amir Mir said the government is determined to ensure that cardiology facilities continue to be accessible to the public. Amir Mir said that former prime minister Mian Nawaz Sharif introduced health card only for the poor in 2015. "It became a mafia in the name of Sehat Card during the PTI era and people became billionaires with it, he lamented. Dr Javed Akram said that the mafia exploited the Sehat card. "The mafia running private hospitals misused the Sehat card and they placed unnecessary stenting just to mint the money. However, he said that the government is determined to deliver the benefits of the health card to the original beneficiaries without closing or limiting access to cardiology services. Dr. Javed Akram said that the government is in the process of negotiating a new contract with the Punjab State Life Insurance Company, with the goal of making further improvements to provide enhanced facilities to the public through the health card system. As the negotiations progress and improvements are made, the government remains focused on delivering effective and efficient healthcare solutions to the people of Punjab, he added.—DNA



ISLAMABAD: President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry Ahsan Bakhtawari is inaugurating "Deewan Syed" restaurant at F8 Center. Former President ICCI Zafar Bakhtavari, Former Senior VP Khalid Chaudhry and others are also present at the occasion.—DNA

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Over 318,000 tourists visited northern regions

RAWALPINDI: On the joyous occasion of Eid-ul-Azha, more than 318,000 tourists visited the northern regions including Murree from June 29 to July 1. Assistant Director Punjab Department of Tourist Services, Syed Khurram Hasan said that as many as 156 foreign tourists also visited Murree for entertainment while 37,369 came to Patriata for enjoying the joys of Eid. He said that the highest number of tourists was recorded in Galiat during the Eid holidays and the Punjab tourism squad also provided the best kind of facilities to the tourists. Khurram said that tourist facilitation centres had provided round-the-clock information to tourists during the holidays. A large number of elderly and women tourists were given facilities on priority, he said and added that tourists visiting Murree can contact Punjab Tourism Squad helpline 1421 in case of any emergency or problem.—APP

Governor Sindh committed for welfare of people

KARACHI: Sindh Governor Mohammed Kamran Khan Tessori has said that when he took the charge of Governor, he committed himself to do whatever he could do for the welfare of the people. He stated this in a reception held in recognition of his services by businessman and CEO unity foods Farrukh Amin at his residence.—APP

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 04/USA
Independence Day
July 05/Algeria
Independence Day
July 09/Argentina
Independence Day
July 09/Mongolia
Revolution Day
July 14/France
National Day
July 15/Brunei
Federation
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

Hotels & Restaurants



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



Turkish Airlines.....8494949



Emergency

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



Enquiry

Edhi Ambulance.....115
PIA Flight Info.....114
PIA Cargo.....9280979
Railway Inquiry.....117
Railway Exchange 9270831-5
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



Departments

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

Water Tank

Islamabad.....0321-5744480

Tourists asked to observe traffic rules to avoid mishaps

Special teams had been formed to facilitate the tourists and resolve their problems if any in Murree, he said adding, parking the vehicles were not being allowed outside the parking areas

RAWALPINDI: City Traffic Police (CTP) on the directives of Commissioner Rawalpindi Division had finalized all the arrangements to ensure the security of the visitors and facilitate the tourists in Murree, particularly during the Eid ul Azha holidays while the tourists had been urged to strictly observe traffic rules to avoid traffic congestion and road mishaps, said a City Traffic Police spokesman. He informed that the City Traffic Officer, Rawalpindi Tamoor Khan had requested the tourists to observe traffic rules on the roads of Murree to avoid traffic mess and any untoward

incidents during summer season. Special teams had been formed to facilitate the tourists and resolve their problems if any in Murree, he said adding, parking the vehicles were not being allowed outside the parking areas. There was a complete ban on illegal parking on the roads in Murree particularly at exit and entry points besides restrictions on cooking at the roadside. The spokesman informed that single, double parking was not being allowed on roads except designated parking places. The motorcyclists without safety helmets were not being allowed to enter Murree, he added. Several

roads including Bank Road, GPO Chowk to Kashmir Point, Hall Road, Lalazar to Kashmir Point, View Fourth Road, View Fourth Road to GPO Chowk, Guldana Road, GPO Chowk to Guldana Chowk, Dilkusha Road, Imtiaz Shaheed Road to Lari Adda via Dilkusha Hotel, Cecil Road, Imtiaz Shaheed Road to Cart Road via Cecil Apartments, and Pindi Point had been declared one-way roads to facilitate the motorists, he said. According to a district administration spokesman, a main control room had been set up at Jinnah Hall in Unit office Murree, District Council, Municipal

Committee Murree which could be contacted at 051-9269015-16-18. He urged the tourists to cooperate with traffic police so that the traffic mess could be avoided. The motorists should avoid wrong parking on roads which would help ensure the smooth flow of traffic, he said. "The beautiful climate of Murree during summer attracts a large number of tourists so motorists face severe traffic congestion," he said adding that traffic moves even slower due to heavy traffic load. He said the DC had advised the tourists to avoid wrong parking, double lines, speeding, and taking selfies in the

middle of the roads. The spokesman informed that foolproof security was being provided to the tourists in Murree. He said, all the security and traffic arrangements had been finalized to facilitate the tourists. The holidays of all the departments concerned including Murree administration had been canceled to make the arrangements foolproof. A special plan had also been formulated for Murree under which nearly 1000 personnel including over 700 cops and 285 CTP officials were performing their duties to facilitate the visitors. —Agencies

Around 40,000 people thronged 'Lake View' park

ISLAMABAD: As many as 40,000 thousand people thronged 'Lake View Park' to enjoy barbecue parties after Eidul Azha with their family and friends.

With its spacious location at the shores of Rawal Dam, Lake View Park has started attracting more visitors than other public parks and picnic spots in the twin cities, reported a private news channel. Traditionally, people used to go to Ayub Park and Nawaz Sharif Park but now both the places seem too crowded and there is little for enjoyment," there are also other attractions in the federal capital including Japanese Park, the Zoo and the whole track up to Pir Sohawa.—APP

Avoid to storage of meat after

ISLAMABAD: Health Expert on Sunday advised people to avoid storage of meat after Eid-ul-Azha as excessive use of red meat can increase the risk of developing cardiovascular, kidney, liver, diabetes and gastroenteritis diseases.

Health Expert Dr Tariq Masood talking to private news channel said eating excessive meat during Eid-ul-Azha could have negative impacts on health and especially for those who stored this meat for several months. Each year, public and private healthcare facilities receive scores of cases of various stomach and other illnesses after Eidul Azha due to the high consumption of meat. He added that the use of frozen meat could be harmful as it may affect kidneys and cause cardiac problems. Dr said overeating could cause gastric irritation, high cholesterol, acidity, abdominal contraction, nausea, diarrhea, heart problems, and constipation. He recommended low-fat dishes during Eid and said it would help the people enjoy the festival to the maximum. He said since most of the food on Eid-ul-Azha was meat-based, use of fat and high-calorie sauces in their preparation should be avoided.—APP

AIOU announces admissions for Autumn 2023

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) has announced the schedule for the admissions in the semester of Autumn 2023. According to the AIOU, the admissions for the first phase of Semester Autumn 2023 will commence from July 15, while the admissions for the second phase will start from September 1 across the country. Vice Chancellor AIOU, Prof Dr. Nasir Mahmood has given the approval to establish information counters, facilitation centers and prospectus sale points across the country to facilitate the students at the nearest places to their residences.



ISLAMABAD: PML N leader Zeeshan Naqvi inspects disposal of animal waste on the occasion of Eid ul Adha.—DNA

Public enjoying barbecue parties

ISLAMABAD: Families and youngsters in twin cities of Islamabad and Rawalpindi thronged public parks, open spaces, and hilly areas to celebrate barbecue parties after Eid-ul-Azha that filled the air with the smoked aroma of grilled food. According to a private news channel, the youngsters are busy to arrange special barbecue parties on rooftops, green lawns, and open places as well other picnic spots for their friends and family members. Such parties not only give an opportunity to enjoy Eid with loved ones but also gives a chance to taste different types of dishes made of sacrificial meat. Week-long holidays along with the pleasant weather have added charm to Eid festivities as everyone enjoys delicious meat dishes with family and friends.—APP

World Youth Skills Day to be marked on July 15

ISLAMABAD: World Youth Skills Day will be marked on July 15 (Saturday) across the globe including Pakistan, aim of the day is to encourage youth to celebrate the value of acquiring skills like building, making, and creating as a way to achieve personal success and fulfillment. By empowering young people, they can better advance the broader mission of the United Nations (UN) for lasting peace, sustainable development, and human rights for all, according to UN Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon. A UN resolution to establish a World Youth Skills Day was adopted by the General Assembly on December 18, 2014. On the UN's website, they state that education and training are the keys to success in the workforce. However, unfortunately, existing systems are failing to address the learning needs of many young people. A large number of youths have low levels of achievement in basic literacy and numeracy, according to surveys. Skills and jobs for youth feature prominently in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. 13.1% Youth Unemployment Both the resolution and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) quotes an International Labour Organization (ILO) publication which states that 73.4 million young people were estimated to be unemployed in 2015, which equated to a 13.1% youth unemployment rate. The figure was expected to increase in most regions by 2017. UNESCO states that one reason for youth unemployment, which affects all regions around the world, is a mismatch between the skills workers can offer and the skills that are in demand. This is known as structural unemployment. On World Youth Skills Day on July 15, 2017, the United Nations (UN) will host a special event, themed "Skills Development to Improve Youth Employment." During the event, the organization will launch "The World Youth Report on Youth Civic Engagement," prepared by the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs.—APP

World Population Day to be marked on July 11

ISLAMABAD: 'World Population Day' will be marked on July 11 (Tuesday) across the globe to reaffirm the human right to plan for a family. It encourages activities, events, and information to help make this right a reality throughout the world. Family planning is an important topic raised during 'World Population Day'. 'World Population Day' aims to increase people's awareness about various population issues such as the importance of family planning, gender equality, poverty, maternal health, and human rights. The day is celebrated worldwide by business groups, community organizations, and individuals in many ways. Activities include seminar discussions, educational information sessions, and essay competitions. In 1968 world leaders proclaimed that individuals had a basic human right to determine freely and responsibly the number and timing of their children.—APP

Farmers urged to switch to intercropping methods

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Rice Research and Development Board Punjab Shahzad Ali Malik on Sunday stressed the urgent need for switching over to "intercropping" for growing two or multiple crops simultaneously in the same field for bumper agricultural production to achieve food autarky besides boosting the profitability of farmers across the country. Talking to a delegation of progressive farmers led by Pir Saddam Hussain Shah of Pindi Shaikh Musa district Faisalabad, he said intercropping can significantly enhance overall crop productivity, said a press release. By growing different crops together, farmers can maximize the use of available resources, such as sunlight, water, and nutrients, he added. He said the complementary nature of different crops helps in better utilization of the growing

space, resulting in higher yields per acre. "Income from intercropping can improve farm profitability and financial stability," he said. Intercropping provides a form of insurance against crop failure. If one crop is susceptible to pests, diseases, or adverse weather conditions, the other crops in the mixture can compensate for the losses. This diversification of crops reduces the risk of complete crop failure and helps farmers maintain a more stable income, he added. He said different crops have different nutrient requirements and intercropping allows for the efficient utilization of soil nutrients, as crops with contrasting nutrient needs can be grown together. He said overall, intercropping offers numerous advantages, including increased yield, risk reduction, efficient resource utilization, weed suppression,

Implication of Russia-Ukraine war On national security of Pakistan

KHOLA JUNAID

On February 2022, Russia began a military war against Ukraine, since the collapse of the "Soviet Union" Russia has harboured deep animosity towards Ukraine, which it still views as a critical part of Soviet Union and aims to revive the Russian empire while preventing a democratic encirclement of the country. It views the invasion of Ukraine as conveying a clear statement about its opposition to NATO's further expansion against Russia and Ukraine's future intentions to join NATO. "Strong do what he wants to do and weak has to suffer" This is the situation of Pakistan in the Russian-Ukraine war. The ongoing confrontation between Russia and Ukraine has significant repercussions for the geopolitical environment worldwide. Countries all across the world are being compelled to think about how the conflict may affect their own national security interests as it intensifies. Pakistan, which has a history of relations with both Russia and Ukraine, is one such nation. In this article,

we will discuss how the conflict between Russia and Ukraine have implications on Pakistan's national security. Most nations are feeling the heat of the ongoing Russian-Ukraine conflict in the form of shortages of basic goods and rising costs. In all of its manifestations, the conflict in Ukraine is damaging the global economy, which was already reeling from COVID-19. Pakistan is an unstable developing country already facing the issue of balance of payments and not the imminent but the risk of default. Pakistan can be impacted by this conflict from both political and economical fronts. Diverse facets of the population while seeing the policies of U.S towards Pakistan demand the policy makers to side towards Russia. But for Pakistan a country with drowning economy, devaluing currency and at the peaks of political instability it wouldn't be good choice to make. Pakistan a country that largely depends on exports, it imports military weapons from Russia and has made arrangements to buy LNG (liquefied natural gas) to fulfill its energy demands. Furthermore, Pakistan imports wheat and meslin from Ukraine,

with imports totaling US\$477.78 million in 2021. However, Russia's invasion of Ukraine has put strain on the global supply chain, resulting in higher LNG prices. LNG companies have backed down on their agreements with Pakistan in order to access more lucrative European markets, generating immediate problems for Pakistan, which is now forced to buy costly LNG. Due to the ongoing conflict between Russia and Ukraine, Russia's blockade of Ukrainian ports has prevented Ukraine's wheat and other agricultural exports from reaching several nations. As a result, Pakistan and a number of other countries have experienced food shortages, resulting in price increases. Hence, Pakistan is experiencing frequent and extended power outages, exorbitant electricity bills, and obstacles to other services with rapidly increasing inflation. Since the beginning of the war, the price of oil has increased to above \$100 approx. per barrel, and supply and development have stalled. Further fuel price increases is disastrous for Pakistan since it has further depleted its foreign exchange reserves. Furthermore the ongoing con-

front between Russia and Ukraine has implications beyond just economic issues, and could potentially impact Pakistan's security. As it can cause regional instability and reviving hostilities between Pakistan and India, two nuclear-armed neighbors. Russia has recently provided India with cutting-edge military equipment and gear, including the S-400 air defense system, which has caused Pakistan to be apprehensive. India is making sure that it doesn't condemn Russia and sever ties with it, as it doesn't want China and Pakistan to get closer to Russia and form an alliance, which would not be in the strategic interest of India and would be a security threat for it. India is trying to forge friendship with Russia so that Pakistan or China don't get a chance to do so. The Ukrainian war has brought national sovereignty and territorial integrity concerns to light, which might have implications for Pakistan's own territorial disputes. Pakistan may be concerned about how the war is influencing international standards regarding these matters and the possible effects it might have on its own claims

to disputed territories. So the Russian-Ukraine conflict has its implications on Pakistan's National Security and can even worsen and effects Pakistan territorial sovereignty. For that matter the situation in Ukraine must be constantly monitored by Pakistan, and it must take action to lessen any detrimental effects on its interests in national security. Also, Pakistan a country that borders with Afghanistan, any unrest in region could possibly spill over into Pakistan, the conflict has affected Afghanistan's security situation. Following the withdrawal of US forces, Afghanistan is now more susceptible to unrest and hostilities. The Taliban have been alleged to receive backing from Russia, which could exacerbate the situation in Afghanistan and cause it to spread into Pakistan. The situation in Ukraine must be constantly monitored by Pakistan, and it must take action to lessen any detrimental effects on its interests in national security. To avoid becoming overly dependent on any one of the nation, it must diversify its supplies of LNG, wheat, and other neces-

sities. To lessen its reliance on fossil fuels, Pakistan must also endeavor to upgrade its energy infrastructure and create its own renewable energy sources. In conclusion, Pakistan's national security is significantly being impacted by the ongoing conflict between Russia and Ukraine. Pakistan is already experiencing the economic effects of conflict, with increased prices and a shortage in basic necessities. But there is also a fear regarding the conflict's potential to spread to other regions, such as extremist activities and military buildup. Pakistan has maintained a stance of neutrality towards the Russian-Ukraine conflict because Pakistan is not in the condition to face the pressure and side effects of parting with one side, as two super powers one through proxy means and the other is directly involved in the war. Moreover, to protect its own interests and uphold regional stability, Pakistan must carefully navigate this complex geopolitical landscape. Pakistan must protect its national security interests and for that matter it should do whatever it takes. —The writer is a student at the National Defense University.

Briefs

DSEZ will pave a new era of industrialization for Pakistan

DNA

ISLAMABAD: To promote the value addition component in exports, generate employment, encourage the import situation, and mobilize foreign exchange for the balance of payments support, Dhabaji Special Economic Zones (DSEZ) in Thatta Sindh is another mega project designed within the framework of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) a core component of Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). In a major development last week, Federal Minister for Board of Investment (BOI) Choudhary Salik Hussain chaired the 8th meeting of the Approvals Committee which approved the establishment of eight SEZs including the DSEZ Thatta. According to a Gwadar Pro's report, "Dhabaji Special Economic Zone has been granted SEZ status after much anticipation; DSEZ will pave a new era of industrialization for Karachi and Pakistan; the groundbreaking is to be held in mid-July 2023," reads an official statement of Sindh Economic Zones Management Company (SEZMC). DSEZ will facilitate the potential investors of China and other countries to either start new enterprises or transfer their facilities to Pakistan. In 2021, a technical issue emerged regarding the awarding of the contract of Dhabaji Industrial Zone (DIZ) when a petitioner raised questions that the rules of SEZ were not followed during awarding of the contract. SEZMC stated DIZ is not a special economic zone and later will be declared as SEZ. Now, the government has officially declared DIZ as DSEZ. According to CPEC's official website, 1530 acres of land have been allocated to establish DSEZ which will be developed in two phases. DSEZ has been proposed to be constructed in two phases comprising 750 acres for Phase I and 780 acres for Phase II.

Authorities directed to resolve revenue matters

RAWALPINDI: Commissioner Rawalpindi Division Liaquat Ali Chatha has directed the authorities concerned to complete all the 'Jamabandis' as soon as possible. According to a Commissioner Office spokesperson, the Commissioner had also instructed that all revenue matters including the issues of 'Khasra, Gardavari, Jamabandi, and blocked khawat' should be resolved on a priority basis. The allotment of land should be done in presence of all the parties concerned and unilateral decision would not be accepted, he added. No revenue case should remain pending for more than six months, he said. High performing officers would be encouraged and action would be taken against those who are not performing well, the Commissioner said. Negligence on part of the officials concerned would not be tolerated as the citizens face difficulties due to slow work in revenue matters, he added. He directed the administration to ensure cleanliness of the roads and plant more saplings in green areas.

Naran, Shogran witness massive influx of tourists

ISLAMABAD: The Kaghan, Naran and Shogran valleys Sunday have become hotspots for tourists, attracting a large number of visitors during the Eid holidays. During a span of three days, an astounding 22,500 vehicles and 7,710 motorcycles have made their way into these breathtaking valleys. To cater to the influx of tourists, the authorities have taken significant measures by announcing the continuous opening of Babusar Top 24 hours a day over the next three days. Families, seeking to amplify their Eid celebrations are gathering in Naran, where the crystal-clear waters of the Kunhar River in Naran have captivated fishing enthusiasts, while others enjoy the melodious music alongside the river.—APP

ANF arrests 1652 drug smugglers

ANF has also been actively involved in drug demand reduction through awareness programs across the country in the form of lectures, seminars, walks and sports activities, he said adding, ANF rehabilitation centers treated 1879 drug addicts during the period

DNA

RAWALPINDI: Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) Pakistan in their operations conducted across the country managed to net 1652 drug smugglers during last 12 months and registered 1678 cases against the accused. According to an ANF Headquarters spokesman, ANF recovered over 157.551 metric tons drugs during the period. He informed that as the premier

anti-narcotics agency, the ANF, along with other law enforcement agencies, continued to be at the forefront of national anti-narcotics efforts. ANF seized over 4379.103 kg of meth, 207.561 kg of amphetamine, 492.094 kg of intoxicated tablets, 32312.061 liters of various types of prohibited chemicals, he said. He further informed that additionally, 61781.257 kg of hashish, 43197.508 kg of opium, 9316.695 kg of heroin, 5459.8 kg of morphine, 11.249

kg of cocaine and 3374.103 kg of other drugs were also seized during the period. Maintaining a strategic orientation resulting from permanent deployments at airports, seaports, dry ports, and border terminals, the ANF continued to conduct regular operations across inter-provincial borders and to control drug trafficking to secure urban centers, he said. Special attention was also given to international flights, cargo and container traffic. However, it has

been noted that chemical drug seizures doubled as compared to 2021 and 2022, the spokesman added. ANF has also been actively involved in drug demand reduction through awareness programs across the country in the form of lectures, seminars, walks and sports activities, he said adding, ANF rehabilitation centers treated 1879 drug addicts during the period. Two more rehabilitation centers, Malir and Mangopeer, were established and made operational

in Karachi, he said. ANF also conducted eight maritime operations in 2023 in collaboration with international counterparts, he said and informed that a total of 18.33 tons of drugs including 13.275 metric tons charras, 3.3 metric tons of heroin and 1.6982 metric tons of methamphetamine (ice) were seized. These operations were carried out on the high seas based on intelligence provided by the ANF to maritime international law enforcement agencies, he added.



ISLAMABAD: Editor Daily Islamabad POST, Centreline Magazine and DNA News Agency writing his condolences on the sad demise of Ambassador of Romania Nicolae Goia. Ambassador Goia's passing is an irreplaceable loss for both Romania and Pakistan. His dedication and commitment to strengthening bilateral relations between the two nations were unparalleled. Throughout his tenure, he fostered an environment of friendship, cooperation, and mutual understanding, leaving a lasting impact on the diplomatic landscape.—DNA

Dar congratulated for better than predicted deal

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Former Vice President of FPCCI Atif Ikram Sheikh said on Saturday lauded the government for finalising a critical deal with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) hours before expiry of the current programme. The IMF has reached a staff-level pact with Pakistan on a \$3 billion stand-by arrangement, for which Pakistan was trying since months to avoid a default, he said. The deal offers some breather to the government, which is battling an acute balance of payments crisis and falling foreign exchange reserves, he added. Atif Ikram Sheikh who has also served as President ICCI and Chairman PVMA said in a statement issued here today that the funding, spread over nine months, is higher than expected for Pakistan. Pandemic, political struggle, devastating floods, commodity price hikes following, and policy missteps pushed Pakistan to the brink, stalled economic growth and inflation broke

all the previous records making live of the masses a living hell, he added. The business leader said that despite efforts to reduce imports and the trade deficit, reserves have declined to very low levels, power sector deteriorated and confidence of the business community touch the lowest levels. However, he added, now the recent arrangement with IMF would provide an opportunity to get loans from others multilateral and bilateral partners as country needs at least 24 billion dollars in the next fiscal to repay loans, he observed. Atif Ikram Sheikh said that the Stand-By Arrangement (SBA) will support efforts of the government to stabilise the economy from recent external shocks, preserve macroeconomic stability and provide a framework for further loans. SBA will also create space for social and development spending through improved domestic revenue mobilization and careful spending execution to help address the needs of the people. Dedi-

cated policy implementation is key to overcome its current challenges, including fiscal discipline, a market-determined exchange rate, and further progress on reforms, particularly in the energy sector, to promote climate resilience. The parliament had approved the FY24 budget in line with the goals supporting fiscal sustainability and mobilising revenue; this which will enable greater social and development spending, but steps are required to broaden the tax base and increase tax collection from untaxed and under taxed sectors. It will be very important that the budget is executed as planned, and the authorities resist pressures for budgeted spending or tax exemptions in the period ahead, he emphasised. The State Bank of Pakistan has withdrawn the guidance on import prioritisation and is committed to ensuring the full market determination of the exchange rate, which will improve the economy and the confidence of the business community.

Chinese firms, Punjab govt to collaborate in meat export

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Chinese firms and Punjab govt have agreed to collaborate in meat export, disease control. A Chinese delegation led by Vice President Royal Group Ms. Teng Cuijin met with Secretary Livestock Punjab Masood Anwar. They discussed avenues for collaboration in the livestock sector including the export of meat to China, according to Gwadar Pro. The Chinese delegation expressed the desire to cooperate with the Punjab government in areas including the export of meat to China, disease control, genomics, and breed improvement. It also sought land and the

required facilities for manufacturing veterinary vaccines, the Punjab Livestock Department stated on June 27. The Secretary welcomed proposals to set up special beef and dairy economic zones. He said that proposals to collaborate with Chinese experts in controlling foot-and-mouth disease (FMD) and other animal illnesses are under consideration. Ms. Teng Cuijin said that they wanted to save the livestock in Punjab from diseases along with trade cooperation. Director of Royal Cell Biotechnology, Dr. Qaisar Shahzad told Gwadar Pro that the Royal Group wanted to initially export heat-treated meat to China. Later, after setting up a disease-free

animal farm, the firm will look to export fresh meat and milk to China, he said. Dr. Qaisar said that Royal Cell has already established a 70-acre farm in Sheikhpura, which can accommodate 4,500 animals. "Presently, we have purchased 200 animals and will soon achieve our initial target of 1,000 animals," he said. He said that the farm will be duly notified as disease-free by the Punjab government. He further said that representatives of the Inner Mongolia Bigvet Biotech Co. also accompanied them. They intend to explore the market for their FMD vaccines in Pakistan and later establish a manufacturing unit in Punjab, he said.

Chinese enterprise supports digital ticketing system in Pakistan

DNA



ISLAMABAD: Chinese enterprise will continue to support digital ticketing system in Pakistan to facilitate the passengers The passenger ticketing system of the RABTA project of the Ministry of Railways, Pakistan was successfully launched last month. The first two trains running with the system were 107UP and 108DN of the Islamabad Express. Passengers commuting between Islamabad and Lahore can easily book tickets through the system and also can choose appropriate train numbers and seats on the website, Gwadar Pro reported. In 2021, Chinese technology company Easyway Innovation Co., Ltd won the bid for the RABTA project of Pakistan Railways. The company will continue its 12-year operational service to provide Pakistan Railways with a comprehensive and modern information system covering passenger tickets, freight, baggage, and train tracking upon the completion of the RABTA project. The RABTA ticket section is to build a nationwide ticket and travel platform across Pakistan, offering services including itinerary planning, ticket purchase, and taking in-station services, to continue to provide passengers with full itinerary information services. In the offline part, manual sales of paper pre-fabricated tickets will be eliminated nationwide, and all commercially operated stations will open electronic ticketing systems and install passenger self-service devices.

IMF has given Pak one final chance

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Dr. Murtaza Mughal, President of PEW said on Sunday that after efforts Pakistan got IMF's nod which is the last chance to improve its damaged

economy. The IMF has also given a roadmap for economic recovery, which needs to be fully implemented, he said. Violation of agreements with the IMF has never benefited Pakistan but has caused heavy losses, said Dr. Murtaza

Mughal, President of PEW. In a statement issued here today, he said that some political figures wasted more than a year in reaching an agreement with the IMF and despite their best efforts, they could not change the stance of the IMF.

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PFC to take part Imam Abu Hanifa Expo

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Furniture Council (PFC) will take part in the 3-days Imam Abu Hanifa 2nd International and National Expo and Trade Fair Kabul starting from July 16 to discover business opportunities and explore new market access for Pakistani products. Chief Executive Officer PFC Mian Kashif Ashfaq talking to a delegation of industrialists led by Ch Zeeshan Elahi Arain CEO Marvel Cables here on Sunday said that PFC along with Chenone will be participating in this mega event, said a news release. "Chenone will also exhibit its high-quality international standards products to capture their share in the global market besides it's an excellent opportunity to showcase Pak products and develop business deals with international buyers", he added. Mian Kashif Ashfaq said that around over hundreds of Pak companies will be exhibiting their products which included furniture, textile, garments, leather garments, sportswear, sports goods engineering, etc. He said this expo will also offer professional buyers a sourcing platform with a wide variety of products ranging from basics to the most creative and qualitative.

IRSA releases 251,600 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD: Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Sunday released 251,600 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 409,000 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1511.27 feet and was 113.27 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 218,200 cusecs and 110,000 cusecs respectively. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1180.70 feet, which was 130.70 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet.—APP

Karot HPP contributes 3.64 billion units of clean electricity

ISLAMABAD: The 720 megawatts Karot hydropower plant contributed around 3.64 billion units of clean and low-cost electricity to the National Grid in one year of its commercial operations. This was disclosed by CTG Int'l, which marks the completion of the first year of the commercial operations of the Karot hydropower project. Karot was the first hydropower project completed under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) initiative, which started commercial operations on June 29, 2022. According to a Gwadar Pro's report, that Karot contributed Rs 4 billion worth of electricity to the National Grid free of cost during its testing and commissioning phase. Karot is a steady source of clean and affordable electricity for Pakistan. According to the latest energy purchase data released on June 15 by the National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (NEPRA), Karot contributed more than 509.86 million units of electricity in May 2023 at a cost of Rs 115.02 million.—DNA

Sino-US science deal

In an attempt to chip away at the already shaky foundations of the China-US relationship, some Republican lawmakers on Tuesday urged the US State Department to not renew a decades-old bilateral agreement on scientific cooperation on the grounds that it would help China modernize its military. In a letter sent to Secretary of State Antony Blinken, the chair of the US House of Representatives' Select Committee on China Mike Gallagher and nine other Republican representatives alleged that the deal, set to expire on Aug 27, would enable Beijing to use "academic researchers, industrial espionage, forced technology transfers, and other tactics to gain an edge in critical technologies, which in turn fuels the People's Liberation Army modernization", and thus it should be scrapped. The US-China Agreement on Cooperation in Science and Technology was the first bilateral accord signed by the two countries after relations were normalized in 1979. It has to be renewed about every five years and is seen as a symbol of robust government-to-government science and technology collaboration that continues to this day. Moreover, over the past four decades, more than 30 protocols and deals in a wide range of areas – including health, engineering, climate change and environmental protection – have been signed, and hundreds of joint programs conducted under the framework of the agreement, laying solid common ground upon which the two countries could build mutual trust and broaden cooperation. Those who call for an end to China-US cooperation in the fields of science and technology seem ignorant of the fact that the agreement is not a favor granted to China by the US, but a partnership that enables both Chinese and US scientists as well as scholars and students to learn from and share with each other research data, experience and expertise to the benefit and prosperity of both countries. Any politically motivated setbacks in terms of China-US cooperation in science and technology will not only cause more damage to the already souring bilateral relations, but also compromise their joint efforts to address such global issues as climate change. Washington has always said it has no intention to trigger a conflict with, or contain China, and wants to maintain a stable relationship that has "guardrails". But sincerity is subject to proof, and it is actions, not words, that really count. The outcome on the science and technology agreement – one of the few remaining fruits of Sino-US cooperation on the basis of equality, reciprocity and mutual benefit – will serve to show to what extent the US is willing to do damage control in terms of its relations with China.

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Riots in France

Right- and leftwing politicians, social scientists, analysts and commentators have rushed to variously condemn, explain, exploit and justify the fury and violence that erupted in many French cities after Tuesday's fatal police shooting of Nahel Merzouk, a 17-year-old boy of north African descent. But some of the most revealing and insightful testimony came from Kendra, a resident of the Pablo Picasso estate in the Nanterre suburb of Paris, near to where the teenager was killed during a traffic-stop. There have been 21 fatal police traffic-stop shootings since 2020. Most of the victims were of black or Arab origin. "For hours last night, there were young people everywhere, in groups on lots of different roads," Kendra, 40, told Guardian correspondent Angelique Chrisafis. "I really think young people here consider themselves at war. They see it as war against the system. It is not just against the police, it goes further than that, otherwise we wouldn't be seeing it all across France. It's not just the police under attack but town halls and buildings being targeted... There's a political dimension, a sense of the system not working. Young people feel discriminated against and ignored." Merzouk's death, and the emergence of a video showing the moment he was shot at point-blank range inside his car, are uniquely distressing for his mother, family and friends. Yet the fact that this was not an isolated incident but one that reflects wider problems in French policing, race relations and society must be evident to all. The aggressive, sometimes brutal methods employed by heavily armed, ill-disciplined French police are a longstanding problem. The issue was highlighted during the "yellow vest" street protests in 2018-19, when thousands of demonstrators (and many officers) were injured. Similar trouble arose during pension reform protests this year. Civil liberties organisations have been highly critical. The UN's human rights watchdog weighed in again last week, saying Merzouk's shooting was a "moment for [France] to seriously address the deep issues of racism and racial discrimination in law enforcement". The failure of France's political classes to tackle this issue is one reason why many young, especially people of colour, believe themselves at war with "the system". The inflammatory response of far-right politicians such as Eric Zemmour, who spoke in terms of "civil war" and "insurrection", was disgracefully, typically racist. Yet Emmanuel Macron, France's president, is not coming out of this well, either. Photographed at an Elton John concert while Paris burned, he was accused of irresponsibility. Scrambling to regain control, he angered police unions by calling the shooting "inexcusable" even as his appeals to uphold law and order were widely ignored. That police leaders feel justified in describing teenaged rioters as "vermin" and "savage hordes" is indicative of the dangerous, ever-widening gulf dividing France's "haves" and "have-nots". Poverty, ghetto-like suburban estates, joblessness, limited life chances and social alienation are problems facing younger people in many developed countries, not least Britain. When chronic, unaddressed institutional racism in the justice system, in other state structures and society at large is added to this volatile mix, it's little wonder uncontained explosions occur. What's happening in France is a warning to all.

Discipline and self-accountability soul to armed forces

Waheed Hussain



It has been a great debate that majority of civilian state institutions in the country have been bitterly damaged, effecting their efficiencies-performance except the Armed Forces of Pakistan. The merit-based promotion policy coupled with reward and punishment criteria made the armed forces exclusive and dependable. Naturally, If the armed forces had not been following the tough policy of reward and punishment, then the morale and spirit to fight for the security and defense of the country would have been on the slide. The Director General Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) Major General Ahmed Sharif Chaudhry held a comprehensive, thought-provoking news conference on Monday, 26 May, 2023, at Rawalpindi, mainly disclosing the details about a disciplinary action that had been taken against all those army officers who had demonstrated negligence to their assigned duties on the May 9 violent protests by the PTI leaders and workers as a result of the arrest of their chairman and former prime minister. Looking into the May 9 violent incidents throughout the country it reflects that there was a planning and strategy to target mainly the military installations. In this process, the violent protestors also attacked the monuments of the Shuhadas (martyrs) badly hurting the feeling of both the Shuhadas' families and the entire nation. Shuhadas are the national heroes, who sacrificed their lives in defending the motherland. They are above all political vengeance and divide. Apart from action against the protestors, there have been a lot of speculations and rumors about action against senior commanders with reference to 9 May incidents. So, the articulated announcement made by the Army Spokesperson regarding strict action against those army officers who displayed negligence in performing their duties at various levels, addressed the questions being raised by both masses and the media. The General told reporters that three officers have been removed from the service including a three-star Lieutenant General failing in performing their duties on 9 May violent protest, was a sheer example of the policy of discipline- reward and punishment. The story of taking action against those who showed negligence does not end here, it was informed that 15 other high-ranking officers, including three major generals and seven brigadiers were passing through a tough inquiry process, by two different committees, headed by two Major Generals. This shows the sensitivity of the matter. When the army books (rules, reg-

ulations, laws) say that army operates on the policy of discipline-reward and punishment, then what does it mean? It means merit, a tough process of selection and promotion to next grade/position. Reaching to a level of Lieutenant General was a very hard process of more than 35 years' service including going through number of courses and degrees achieved from prestigious war colleges-universities within and outside Pakistan. Total 18 officer went through the strict screening of the inquiry was a message to all those who were involved in that heinous crime that if the army can take action against its own senior most commanders, it would not spare the criminals, who violated law of the land. The General Sharif reiterated that it was a well-planned, preconceived conspiracy against army and state, involving people from other countries. He said all it was done for the political gain, to regain the power. Lot of voices have been raised on the issue of civilians' trial in the military courts. The Supreme Court of Pakistan was already hearing the petitions in this regard. The DG ISPR informed that 102 cases of accused have been taken up by the 17 different military courts throughout the country. "All those courts were already in operation; no new courts were established," he informed. Actually, those cases were referred by the Anti-Terrorist Courts' judges to the military courts. The parliament and the governments in past had allowed civilians trials in the military courts and this time again the government approved trials of the accused of May 9, in the Military Courts. The government senior ministers and military spokesperson have been clarifying that even if the Military Courts decide or pass an order against an accused, he or she enjoyed the legal right to appeal to Chief of Army Staff (COAS), High Courts and finally the Supreme Court of Pakistan. There had been lot of debate on the human rights violations during raids, arrests, investigation and court proceedings of the arrested by the law enforcement agencies, legal and judicial officers. The voices were being raised by few US Congress members, international human rights organizations after May 9. Replying to a question on the issue of human rights, the DG (ISPR) said that it was a fake propaganda by the anti-Pakistan elements who wants to defame the country and its armed forces. There should not be any doubt that Pakistan Army was the main target in this whole process. However, from human rights point of view, the government and its law enforcement agencies must be careful in performing their duties that the innocent should not be punished just because he or she were the follower or member of a particular political party. We had the history of political victimization by various governments of opposition's MNAs, MPAs, Senators, party leadership and workers. Before signing the Charter of Democracy (COD) by the PML (N) and PPP in London, in 2006, both of them had

been facing each other's politically motivated cases. After 2018 elections, PTI followed the same crush opposition policy and launched severe crackdown against both PML (N) and PPP, arresting their top leadership by using the controversial National Accountability Bureau (NAB) and Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) cases. Today you can see those who were either in jail or facing the money laundering-corruption charges, had been cleared by the two top agencies (NAB-FIA) followed by the courts. and they are ruling this government as Mr "Clean." Instead of focusing on the governance and economy, the former Prime Minister was guided by some exclusive political scientists to crush opposition. Such dirty political culture needs to end. Our politicians did not want to learn from their past, while, this cycle of crush opposition policy will continue to operate. Some people from the west are raising the question of human rights violation issue related to the May 9 violent protests. They need to be educated and told that what happened to those criminals who attacked the Capitol Hill (a building having Upper and Lower Houses of Congress, the House of Representative and the Senate in America) during the Donald Trump's presidency. According to details, 1000 people were charged and punished in Capitol Hill attack. The US administration and courts followed the law of the land so that next time no criminal dare to conceive such a satanic idea. There must be a distinction between criminals and peaceful citizens. Law abiding citizen do have all kind of rights ensured by the constitution of Pakistan, but the law breakers must be punished to create a harmony and peace in the society. Criminals could not be forgiven. They must not be forgiven. On the question of identifying the mastermind of May 9 violence, the DG (ISPR) seemed very careful. He did not give a news to the reporters, as they were expecting, but at the same time, he said that those were the mastermind who had been promoting anti-Pakistan Army narrative. There was a question on the closeness of the PDM government and army. We must understand that armed forces are part of the government. They have their constitutional role to play. The basic role of the Army is to guard the frontiers of the country. To secure the country from all internal and external threats. So, the army cannot operate in isolation. Institutional harmony was important for peace and security and smooth functioning of the country. Here the reporter question gave an impression that army was playing a political role to favor some XYZ political party. Former Army Chief General Qamar Javeed Bajwa in one of his addresses to the officers, soldiers and their families openly said that Army has become neutral and will not play any political role. It is important for all the state institutions to operate in their assigned role by the constitution of Pakistan. The problem begins when the individuals on the top positions try to intrude into others domain. We must learn from the past and should not repeat the same blunders.

Tapping true potential of the agriculture sector

Abdul Rashid Shakir



Enhancing arable land area by introducing world best tech tools in the field; making maximum out of available cultivable land by tilling and laser leveling the soil, sowing genetically-modified seeds, employing best water and crop management techniques, using best quality fertilizers and pesticides for increasing

Ensuring food security, import substitution and export of the agricultural surplus are major targets of a thriving agrarian economy like ours. Enhancing arable land area by introducing world best tech tools in the field; making maximum out of available cultivable land by tilling and laser leveling the soil, sowing genetically-modified seeds, employing best water and crop management techniques, using best quality fertilizers and pesticides for increasing crop yield; processing, packaging and value addition of the agriculture products by investing in agro industry; going for import substitution and exploring avenues for export diversification are some of the prerequisites in this regard. Blessed with natural resources like fertile land and water, Pakistan is a declared agrarian economy. Agriculture is pivotal to the country's economic growth, food security, employment generation and poverty alleviation particularly in the rural areas. It contributes more than 19% to the GDP and provides employment to around 42% of the labor force. Directly or indirectly, around 65-70% of the population is associated with this sector for its livelihood. By developing strong linkages with the industrial and services sectors, it can further spur economic growth. Pakistan has 2% of the world's total arable land, 96% of which is located in the Indus Plain. About 25% of its 796095 square Km area is under cultivation. Major crops include Wheat, Cotton, Rice, Sugarcane and Maize. Pakistan has two cropping seasons: "Khari" and "Rabi". Sowing in "Khari" lasts from April to June and is harvested from October to December. Major crops include rice, sugarcane, cotton, maize, moong, mash, bajra and jowar. On the other hand sowing in "Rabi" sea-

son lasts from October to December and is harvested from April to May. Major crops include wheat, gram, lentil (masoor), tobacco, rapeseed, barley and mustard. Agriculture has 75% share in Pakistan's annual exports of around \$32Billion, 60% of which comes from Punjab. Wheat, being Pakistan's main staple crop, is essential for the country's food security. Rice is not only the second main staple food after wheat but is also the second major exportable commodity after cotton. Cotton stands vital for both agriculture and textile sectors. It contributes around 0.6% to the GDP and accounts for 3.1% of the value added in agriculture. Cotton cultivation in the country has declined over the past several years because of the more profitable competing crops, especially sugarcane. But cognizant of its importance as one of the major raw materials of the textile industry, Syed Mohsin Raza Naqvi-led Government of the Punjab has taken remarkable steps for the revival of cotton crop in the province. One of the important measures in this regard is jacking up cotton support price up to Rs 8500 per 40 Kg to incentivize more and more farmers to cultivate the crop. As a result, the Government of the Punjab has succeeded in cultivating cotton over more than 4.5 Million acres of land in South Punjab, especially Bahawalpur, Multan and DG Khan divisions. After achieving more than 90% of its 5 Million acre target, authorities are now focussed on getting maximum yield of cotton crop by ensuring awareness of farmers in best farm management practices through media campaigns and seminars. Government has established farmers facilitation centers in target districts of South Punjab to ensure availability of sufficient quantities of quality fertilizers and pesticides at controlled rates

to help farmers get maximum yield. A massive crackdown on spurious agro drugs and pesticides is also under way to insulate cotton farmers against heavy losses incurred due to onslaught of various pests. Administrative secretaries have been assigned to personally monitor crop management in each district, and offer farmers one window troubleshooting solution for their problems related to crop management. Government of the Punjab is aggressively pursuing a bumper cotton crop to save valuable foreign exchange spent on the import of around 5 Million bales of cotton per annum, in order to keep its textile industry afloat. Cultivation of edible oil seeds like sunflower, canola and rapeseed is also on the Government's top priority agenda, as their import worth around \$4 Billion annually is a major strain on the country's meager foreign exchange resources. The authorities concerned are developing a comprehensive plan to start a robust campaign for the maximum import substitution of edible oil seeds. Livestock has more than 60% share in the Agriculture sector. Punjab is eager to develop its livestock & poultry, especially in the South Punjab. It would not only enable the country to tap untapped foreign markets like China and the Middle East, but would also promote the country's Halal Meat Industry in the world. Forestry and Fisheries are other areas of the Agriculture sector that have a substantial growth potential. One can comfortably figure out how committed and dedicated the Government of the Punjab is in benefiting from the optimum growth potential of the Agriculture sector especially cotton, edible oil seeds and livestock when we consider its liberal monetary incentives, proper planning and professional follow up of the policies aimed at the growth of the Agriculture sector.

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Briefs

OIC for steps to curb Islamophobia

FROM PAGE 01

Iran and other Muslim countries have strongly condemned the act. Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan has slammed Sweden over the incident, saying Ankara will never bow down to a policy of provocation or threat. "We will teach the arrogant Western people that it is not freedom of expression to insult the sacred values of Muslims," he said. The United Arab Emirates has summoned the Swedish ambassador to protest against the desecration of Holy Quran. Qatar has also condemned the Swedish authorities' permission to burn copies of the Quran Thursday calling it a "heinous" act to have especially occurred on Eid. "The Ministry of Foreign Affairs warns that allowing repeated infringement of the Holy Qu'ran under the pretext of freedom of expression fuels hatred and violence, threatens peaceful coexistence, and reveals abhorrent double standards," its foreign ministry said. Kuwait's Ministry of Foreign Affairs said the burning was a "dangerous, provocative step that inflames the feelings of Muslims around the world". It called on the international community and governments "to take responsibility for swift action to renounce feelings of hatred, extremism and religious intolerance".

FM stresses on increased Pak-Japan trade ties

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The Foreign Minister urged Pakistani overseas particularly businessmen to play their role for increase in trade between two countries and also strengthening of bilateral relations. Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari interacted with a number of Japanese business executives and representatives of Japan International Cooperation Agency and Japan External Trade Organization in Tokyo on Sunday. During the meetings, the matters related to bilateral cooperation in trade and investment came under discussion.

Four jawans martyred...

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offered to the terrorists, adding the entire nation is proud of the sacrifices rendered by the security forces. Balochistan Chief Minister Abdul Qudus Bizenjo condemned the attack, saying terrorists couldn't demoralise security forces with cowardly acts. He said security forces were ensuring the security of the country and the nation with firm determination and courage. Condemning the attack, the Balochistan governor, chief minister and home minister maintained that blood of the martyrs will not go in vain.



MILAN: Deputy Editor Daily Islamabad POST Abid Raza (Middle), together with friends Khalid Gondal and Afzaal Gondal visiting Riva del Garda - a town located in northern Italy, on the shores of Lake Garda. It is situated in the Trentino region, specifically in the province of Trento. - DNA

Naila Kiani becomes first Pak woman to scale Nanga Parbat

The mountain has a daunting ascent along with the risk of unstable glaciers, avalanches and storms. Kiani's summit was confirmed by Secretary Alpine Club of Pakistan Karrar Haidri

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Naila Kiani is a renowned Pakistani mountaineer - Alpine Club of Pakistan Renowned climber Naila Kiani became the first Pakistani woman to scale Nanga Parbat on Sunday. The 8,126-metre peak is known as the 'Killer Mountain' due to its high fatality rate. The mountain has a daunting ascent along with the risk of unstable glaciers, avalanches and storms. Kiani's summit was confirmed by Secretary Alpine Club of Pakistan Karrar Haidri. "Today on July 2, 2023, at 10:18 a.m, Naila Kiani scaled the majestic Nanga Parbat, standing tall at an inspirational height of 8,126 metres," Haidri said. "She did this to become the first Pakistani woman to climb Nanga Parbat. Naila has now ascended seven of the enormous 8,000-metre peaks on the planet, establishing her as one of the most talented climbers of our time. "The legendary Everest, the difficult K2, the commanding Lhotse, the perilous Annapurna, the



elusive G1 and the G2 are just a few of the mountains she has conquered before. "Numerous mountaineers and adventure fans all over the world are inspired by Naila Kiani's unwavering resolve, unmatched abilities, and unwavering attitude. She serves as a bright example of how people can overcome seemingly insurmountable obstacles." Earlier, Sajid Sadpara, who is a noted Pakistani mountaineer, successfully climbed Nanga Parbat without the help of supplementary oxygen and sherpas. It must be noted that Sajid, son of the legendary mountaineer Ali Sadpara, aims to climb all 14 eight-thousanders without the aid of supplemental oxygen. He has already summited K2 (8,611m), Gasherbrum-I (8,080m), and Gasherbrum-II (8,035m) in Pakistan, as well as Manaslu (8,163m) in Nepal, without supplemental oxygen. Sajid has also achieved the unique feat of climbing the world's highest peak Mount Everest without the support of supplementary oxygen and assistance from Sherpas in May 2023.

Djokovic is the 'greatest': Daniil Medvedev

LONDON: Daniil Medvedev has no doubt that Novak Djokovic is the greatest tennis player in history and the world number three believes the Serbian's ability to conjure up victories even on his bad days sets him apart from the rest. Djokovic claimed a men's record 23rd Grand Slam title at the French Open last month to leapfrog Rafa Nadal and go three ahead of another great rival in Roger Federer, with the 36-year-old eyeing an eighth crown at Wimbledon which begins on Monday. Victory in London will leave Djokovic level with Margaret Court on 24 major titles atop the all-time list. "I don't know how does he do it," Medvedev told reporters. "I think if I saw it right, Novak is almost 50%. I think I saw he played 70 majors and 35 (34) he was in the final. I don't know how it is possible. He doesn't have bad days? "Actually, he does, like everybody. Even on these bad days, he manages to beat the opponent. It's actually tough because it's one against one. Both of them want to win. I don't know how he's doing it. That's why he's for me the greatest in the history of tennis. - Agencies

Jessica Pegula wants to look at 'positives' of Saudi deal

LONDON: American world number four Jessica Pegula said doing business with Saudi Arabia can help the WTA in its quest to ensure equal prize money but it will carefully evaluate following other sports to the Gulf state. Saudi Arabia has pumped huge amounts of money into soccer, Formula One and boxing in recent years while the Saudi-backed LIV Golf circuit recently ended its two-year dispute with the PGA Tour and DP World Tour by announcing a merger. WTA chairman Steve Simon said on Friday there were still "big issues" with

Saudi Arabia as potential hosts for WTA events and the governing body of women's tennis had not yet made any decisions or entered into negotiations with the country. "I'm sure we'll talk and go about it," WTA player council member Pegula told reporters ahead of Wimbledon. Men and women get equal prize money at the four Grand Slams. WTA Tour events, however, have often offered less prize money than those on the separate men's ATP circuit, but the WTA last week announced plans to address the issue with a new strategy. "If they (Saudi Arabia) could help getting us to equal prize money, though there are negatives, there's a lot of positives that can come out of it," Pegula added. "Hopefully we don't just look at the negatives and we can see the positives. Hopefully something good comes out of it the right way." Men's ATP Tour chairman Andrea Gaudenzi said last month he held discussions with Saudi Arabia's Public Investment Fund (PIF) and other potential investors on projects including infrastructure, events and technology investment. Critics have accused Saudi Arabia of using the PIF to engage

in "sportwashing" amid criticism of its human rights record. The country denies accusations of human rights abuses and says it protects its national security through its laws. Men's world number one Carlos Alcaraz said he would have no doubts about competing there, while former Grand Slam champion John McEnroe said tennis should not seek Saudi investment. Twice Wimbledon champion Andy Murray said he would have to think twice about playing in Saudi Arabia after refusing in the past to participate in exhibition events there. - DNA

PM summons cabinet session

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According to sources, along with the potential ratification of the five-year national sports policy, the HEC Amendment Bill is also on the table. The matter in line with the waste disposal project in Islamabad will also be part of the meeting agenda. PM Shehbaz will participate in the 23rd Meeting of SCO Council of Heads of State being held in videoconference format on Tuesday (July 4). The invitation to the prime minister to attend the SCO-CHS was extended by Indian counterpart Narendra Modi in his capacity as the current Chair of the SCO. At the forthcoming CHS, the highest forum of the SCO, the leaders will deliberate on important global and regional issues and chart the future direction of cooperation among SCO Member States. This year, the SCO CHS will also welcome Iran as a new member of the organization. PM Shehbaz's participation in the CHS illustrates the high importance that Pakistan attaches to the SCO, as an important forum for regional security and prosperity, and enhanced engagement with the region. On Friday, PM Shehbaz talked about the economic revival plan of the country, saying that everyone will have to put efforts for uplifting the country.

Islamabad, Rawalpindi at risk...

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asked authorities to remain "alert". The heavy rains could also trigger landslides in the vulnerable areas of Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Gilgit Baltistan, and hilly areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa during the same period. From July 3-8, the PMD forecast that rain, wind, and thundershower would hit Islamabad, Rawalpindi, Murree, Galliat, Attock, Chakwal, Jhelum, Kashmir, Gilgit Baltistan. They will also hit Chitral, Swat, Mansehra, Kohistan, Abbottabad, Haripur, Peshawar, Mardan, Swabi, Nowshera, Kurram, Bannu, Lakki Marwat, Kohat, Mianwali, Sargodha, Hafizabad, Mandi Bahaudin, Sialkot, Narawal, Lahore, Gujranwala, Gujrat, Sheikhupura, Faisalabad, Jhang, and Toba Tek Singh.

Rain, wind, thundershower with isolated heavy falls are also expected in Barkhan, Loralai, Sibi, Naseerabad, Kalat, Khuzdar, Zhob, Lasbella, Awaran, Musakhel, D.I Khan, Bannu, Karak, Waziristan, D.G.khan, Rajanpur, Multan, Bhakkar, Layyah, Kot Addu, Bahawalpur, Bahawalnagar, Sahiwal and Okara from July 5 to 8. The PMD also forecast that rain, wind, thundershower with isolated heavy falls are also expected in Sukkur, Jacobabad Ghotki, Shaheed Benazirabad, Larkana, Mithi, Chhor, Padidan, Nagarparkar, Tharparkar, Umerkot, Sanghar, Mirpur Khas, Dadu, Thatta, Badin, Hyderabad, and Karachi on July 7 and 8.

Islamophobia in Sweden

FROM PAGE 01

IN the previous 20 years, right-wing politics has gotten stronger, with ultranationalist and neo-Nazi emotions giving way to Islamophobic and xenophobic beliefs. On September 11, 2022, the Sweden Democrats finally won the majority of parliamentary seats they had sought since their inception in 1988, "marking a new far-right surge in Europe." They will almost certainly continue to battle for Islamophobic and anti-immigrant policies, which have prompted many left-wing parties to adopt tight immigration policies. The report "Islamophobia in Sweden: National Report 2022" provides an overview of rapidly increasing Islamophobia in the broader Swedish context, including increased arbitrary securitization of Muslim civil society groups and organizations, as well as increased anti-Muslim radicalization in online spaces and platforms. Islamophobic discourses are strongly embedded in mainstream political parties and media outlets, urging for increasingly harsh actions against Muslim communities. In the spring of 2022, the leader of the Christian Democratic Party called for police to shoot more "Islamists" in response to rioting in response to an anti-Muslim far-right Danish extremist burning the Quran. Muslims are increasingly shying away from public life in response to widespread accusations of extremism and a lack of political allies. Islamophobic news sites and media outlets are now getting governmental subsidies meant to assist independent media outlets. Meanwhile, due to personal security concerns and usually skewed and hostile media coverage of Muslim organizations in civil society are finding it increasingly difficult to find people ready to act as their representatives. Some governments in Europe have also passed legislation that discriminates against Muslims in the name of combating extremism, in order to get the excuse to close mosques in France and Austria, and the prohibition of new minaret construction in Switzerland. In Denmark, children born into immigrant, typically Muslim communities, dubbed ghetto by the Danish government, must be removed from their fam-

ilies for 35 hours each week in order to learn Danish values. Austrian and French administrations have designated Islamist Separatism and political Islam as national security problems without properly defining those terms or needing a connection to the use or encouragement of violence. These escalating cases of Islamophobia have not only made life difficult for Muslims, but have also jeopardized the European tradition of tolerance and assimilation. This realization prompted the Council of Europe to adopt the EU anti-racism action plan. This plan advocates for more rigorous national measures outlined in national action plans to combat Islamophobia including the fair policing, increased enforcement of EU legislation, minority group protection and launch new projects in areas such as social inclusion, health, and education. The European Parliament adopted the resolution "On racial justice, non-discrimination, and anti-racism in the EU" on November 10, 2022. The resolution recognizes that "racial discrimination and harassment remain commonplace in the EU." Furthermore, the resolution sees an increase in "racist, xenophobic, and homo/transphobic movements and extremist ideologies, particularly extreme right-wing sentiments, which were regarded as "serious threats to democratic societies in the EU, as well as to the safety of racialized groups." The expert body on racism and intolerance (ECRI) of the Council of Europe announced a new General Policy Recommendation on preventing and combatting anti-Muslim racism and discrimination on March 1, 2022. The ECRI stressed that Muslims are intrinsic to Europe's diversity and emphasized the need for collective action in creating inclusive communities that bring individuals from various backgrounds together while upholding equality and respect through a shared set of democratic ideals. The ECRI expressed worry that anti-Muslim prejudice and hostility had become ubiquitous in society in recent years, infiltrating institutional, political, social, and economic life. The ECRI provides policy and institutional coordination advice to governments, as well as prevention, protection, and prosecution, and law enforcement. Its recommendation included; prioritizing the fight against anti-Muslim racism

through appropriate action plans, bring necessary legislative changes, and appointment of coordinators and specialized independent monitoring groups or committees. Governments, according to the ECRI, should also prioritize prevention and encourage political actors, opinion leaders, and other public figures to publicly condemn anti-Muslim prejudice, eliminate discrimination against Muslims in career and educational opportunities, particularly by prioritizing Muslim women's rights and to increase awareness of Muslim history, its diversity, and the positive contributions made by Muslim people, communities, and cultures to European societies. According to the ECRI, governments should partner with social media platforms to develop projects to ensure distribution of correct information about Muslims and Islam on these platforms, ensure the security of Muslims, Muslim communities, and their institutions and foster cooperation between Muslims and law enforcement officers. Furthermore, it is strongly urged to strengthen cooperation and communication with Muslim communities in order to select and implement security measures that address their concerns and needs. In terms of criminal justice and law enforcement, the ECRI recommends that anti-Muslim crimes committed online be dealt with effectively through effective prosecution and other means. Internet service providers must also remove illegal anti-Muslim hate speech quickly and consistently in accordance with the applicable legal and extra-legal framework. The ECRI made its first general policy suggestion in this regard in 2000. The current revised General Policy Recommendation of ECRI emphasized the importance of implementing national anti-Islamophobia action plans after acknowledging the issues faced by Muslims. It offers specific recommendations for Council of Europe member countries on "raising awareness of and combating Islamophobia, or anti-Muslim racism, in Europe." According to Amnesty International (AI), it is a "call to action against Islamophobia in Europe which intends to accuse authorities in several European states of normalizing discrimination against Muslims." AI commented that Racist laws, policies, and practices have no place in Europe and observed that the hate crimes against Muslims and people considered to be Muslim are far too frequently not officially registered or successfully investigated. Surveillance of Muslim men, women, and even children is widely considered as standard practice, and a variety of counter-terrorism methods are being

implemented outside the criminal justice systems, with inadequate safeguards. AI highlighted the importance for Muslims' participation in public places and said that restriction by policies encourage everyday intolerance, bias and discrimination that many Muslims experience is a form of racism. Muslim women's access to public places is restricted through policies and practices that are based on harmful gender stereotypes and are prohibited to wear religious symbols and dress at the workplace, in schools and in public generally. AI reiterated that policymakers must stop using racist and discriminatory rhetoric against Muslims and immediately take action to ensure that they can enjoy their fundamental rights to equality and dignity, and live their lives without discrimination. Every country that is a member of the United Nations is obligated to accept and execute the resolution declaring March 15 as "International Day to Combat Islamophobia" in order to advocate for further change in the battle against anti-Muslim prejudice. The Muslim countries and the OIC should urge the Council of Europe to adopt seriously and implement the ECRI's General Policy Recommendation No. 5 on preventing and fighting anti-Muslim bigotry and discrimination. The proposals should be included into the various national action plans of European Union member countries. European and national institutions should be urged to take the findings of the European Union's Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) seriously in order to remedy the harm caused by anti-terrorism laws to European Muslim communities. The Swedish government must engage in educational and awareness-raising programs, as well as punish perpetrators of hate crimes by holding them accountable in order to create a society in which everyone, regardless of religion, feels safe and respected. Muslims must exercise utmost caution in protesting against this sacrilegious act peacefully, within civilized behavior, without resorting to violence, and without displaying incorrect attitude and behavior in order to demonstrate peaceful teachings of the Quran without being carried away by emotions. While registering their protests, they must imagine what Hazrat Mohammad Peace Be Upon Him would have done if such an event had occurred while he was still alive.

- The writer is Former Press Secretary to the President; Former Press Minister to the Embassy of Pakistan to France; Former MD, SRBC.

Briefs

Dutch King
apologises for
Netherlands'
role in slavery

DNA



THE HAGUE: Other European governments and monarchs are moving at different paces as they confront horrors of the past. Dutch King Willem-Alexander apologised Saturday for his country's role in slavery and asked for forgiveness in a historic speech greeted by cheers and whoops at an event to commemorate the anniversary of the abolition of slavery.

The king's speech followed Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte's apology late last year for the country's role in the slave trade and slavery. It is part of a wider reckoning with colonial histories in the West that have been spurred in recent years by the Black Lives Matter movement.

In an emotional speech, Willem-Alexander referred back to that apology as he told a crowd of invited guests and onlookers: "Today I stand before you. Today, as your King and as a member of the government, I make this apology myself. And I feel the weight of the words in my heart and my soul." The king said he has commissioned a study into the exact role of the royal House of Orange-Nassau in slavery in the Netherlands.

UK, Canada,
and Australia
slam Israel

CANBERRA: Australia, Canada and the UK have rebuked Israel over its decision to create thousands of new settlement units in the West Bank. They also decried a surge of violence between Israelis and Palestinians. In a highly unusual joint statement on Saturday, the foreign ministers of the three countries said they were "gravely concerned" over Israel moving ahead with over 5,700 new homes in the occupied territories. The settlements are widely considered to be illegal. "The continued expansion of settlements is an obstacle to peace and negatively impacts efforts to achieve a negotiated two-state solution," the statement read, calling for Israel to reverse the decision. The ministers said they were also "deeply troubled" by ongoing violence in the region. In particular, they referred to a deadly gun attack by two Palestinians on Israelis near the settlement of Eli in the West Bank, which claimed the lives of four people, including a teenage boy. At the same time, Australia, Canada, and the UK also condemned "the reprehensible and ongoing settler violence targeting Palestinians."—Agencies

Twitter
imposes
tweets
viewing cap

NEWS DESK

LONDON: Twitter users ran into service issues on Saturday after owner Elon Musk imposed limits on how many tweets can be read per day.

Tech mogul and Twitter owner Elon Musk has imposed temporary limits on the number of posts users can read in a day - restrictions he described as an attempt to prevent unauthorized scraping of potentially valuable data from the site. According to a tweet on the billionaire's own Twitter account, verified users will be able to view 10,000 tweets per day, while unverified profiles will only be allowed to see 1,000. The number decreases further for new unverified accounts that will be able to view just 500. On Saturday, he announced a much lower figure, initially limiting most users to viewing 600 tweets a day before updating the figure twice via tweets on his profile. Thousands of people logged complaints about problems accessing Twitter on Saturday after the announcement. —DNA

Geneva moot highlights
plight of Kashmiri prisoners

They said that it was quite astonishing to note that the JKLF chief and other Kashmiri leaders were being penalised just for raising their voice for the voiceless Kashmiris.

MIRPUR :While voicing their grave concern over the continual illegal detention of Kashmiri prisoners in Indian as well as Occupied Kashmir's jails, speakers at a seminar held on the sidelines of the 53rd session of the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC) in Geneva late Saturday, said that thousands of detainees lodged in different jails in and outside the Valley was getting worse with every passing day. "The seminar titled "Plight of Kashmir Prisoners" was attended and addressed by political activists, parliamentarians,

public representatives, law experts and human rights defenders hailing from different parts of the world including Altaf Hussain Wani chairman Kashmir institute of International relations, Faheem Kayani, Hassan ul Bana, Mirza Asif Jarral and others", says a message reaching and released to the media here on Sunday. The speakers continued that thousands of Kashmiris who were arrested before and after 5th August 2019 have been languishing in India's notorious jails like Tihar, which has become a death trap for

Kashmiris. They said that a sizable number of Kashmiris who were taken into preventive custody on 5th August 2019 continue to rot in Amphala, Udhampur, Hiranagar, Khatua and Kotbawal jails. The speakers said that the Indian government has given a free license to its forces and agencies like NIA and Enforcement Directorate to arrest Kashmiris. They said that dozens of top rank political leaders including Muhammad Yasir in Malik, Musarrat Aalam Bhat, Shabir Ahmad Khan, Nayeem Ahmed Khan, Asiya Andrabi and others were

picked up from their homes and whisked off to prisons outside the valley. "They have been actually abducted by NIA and ED and shifted to Tihar Jail under frivolous and concocted charges," the speakers said, adding that scores of detainees including Dr. Qasim Faktoo, Dr. Shafi Shariati, Ghulam Qadir and many more were rotting in jails serving life terms. The speakers, while referring to conviction of prominent Kashmiri leader Muhammad Yasir Malik, said that Malik's conviction in a manifestly dubious and

politically motivated case filed by the Indian National Investigation Agency, amply demonstrates how the Modi government was using judiciary as a weapon to silence legitimate Kashmiri voices. Referring to India's history of using the judiciary and other state apparatus to suppress the political and democratic dissent in the occupied Kashmir, the speakers said that India, which had deprived Malik of his fundamental right to defend himself in the court of law after implicating him in a concocted case, was now hell bent on eliminat-

ing him by using its judiciary. Raising their concerns over the Indian investigation agency's bid to seek the death penalty for Yasir Malik, the speakers said that the NIA's malicious intention poses a grave threat to the life of Mr. Malik who has been leading a nonviolent movement, advocating for the peaceful resolution of the Jammu and Kashmir dispute. They said that it was quite astonishing to note that the JKLF chief and other Kashmiri leaders were being penalised just for raising their voice for the voiceless Kashmiris.—APP

Romania
expels 40
Russian
diplomats

NEWS DESK

BUCHAREST: Forty Russian diplomats and embassy staff have been expelled from Romania as relations worsen between the countries over the war in Ukraine. The staff and their families left on a special flight from Bucharest which was organised by the Russian authorities. The number of staff at the Russian embassy has been slashed by more than half and follows the expulsion of 11 Russian diplomats immediately after Ukraine was invaded in February 2022. Romania was a communist state until a revolution overthrew its dictator Nicolae Ceausescu in 1989, but was never a part of the Soviet Union which collapsed the same year.

Pakistan
opens doors
to Chinese
meat
enterprises

DNA

BEIJING: "There's a lot of potential for enhancing meat exports to China," said Ghulam Qadir, Commercial Counsellor, Pakistani Embassy, while addressing a forum titled "2023 Meat Import Development & Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei Port Cold Chain Economy New Growth Forum". He invited Chinese enterprises to participate in Pakistan's Agri Expo (starting from August 10) in which over 300 top Pakistani agriculture and food processing firms are expected, including meat, fisheries, oil seeds, fruits, and vegetables, food processing ones. According to a Gwadar Pro's report, Ghulam Qadir stated that the Agri Expo undoubtedly will open doors to meat enterprises, unveiling the untapped potential that the country possesses. As businesses leverage the opportunities presented by the Expo, the future of Pakistan's meat sector looks bright, promising sustainable economic development and increased global recognition.

In a landmark decision, the General Administration of Customs of China (GACC) has already granted access to Pakistani boiled beef to the Chinese market, he said. "Donkey meat is another important potential and the protocol on Donkey skin has almost been finalized by Pakistan. This is another opportunity arising. Similarly, donkey meat will be allowed to China in the next two to three months approximately," Qadir added. He further said that the favorable climatic conditions, an abundance of grazing lands, and ample water resources contribute to the availability of high-quality feed for livestock. With a rising demand for meat, both domestically and globally, Pakistan possesses a vast potential to cater to China's growing market.

Germany
reports jump in
unemployment

BERLIN: Unemployment in Germany rose more than expected in June due to "difficult economic conditions," an official report revealed this week. The Federal Employment Agency (BA) said the number of people out of work jumped by 28,000 from the previous month in seasonally adjusted terms. May saw a 13,000 increase from the previous month, the report noted. Analysts polled by Reuters had expected the figure for June to rise by 13,000 as well. According to the BA, unemployment in the country usually declines in the early summer. On average, over the three years before the coronavirus pandemic, it fell by 28,000, or 1%, in June. This year, however, all 16 federal states in Germany have seen a rise in unemployment rates compared to the same month in 2022. "The more difficult economic conditions are now also being felt in the labor market," Reuters quoted labor office head Andrea Nahles. "Unemployment is rising and employment growth is losing momentum," she added.—APP

Leading solar provider commits
to optimizing Pak PV market

DNA

SHANGHAI: China's leading solar solutions provider LONGi and three certification and testing institutions, including SGS (Shanghai), SGS (Qingdao), and Intertek, held here a strategic cooperation signing ceremony in Shanghai. This will enable the four parties to strengthen cooperation in the fields of PSI-COC certification and testing necessary for photovoltaic modules to enter the Pakistani market. Ali Majid, General Manager, Pakistan, LONGi Solar, attended to sign the agreement, according to Gwadar Pro. According to the agreement, the institutions will carry out standardized management of module certification and testing with LONGi. The three certification and testing institutions are consistent with the LONGi agreement, and when certifying LONGi modules whose destination country is Pakistan, the three certification and testing institutions need to obtain written testing authorization from LONGi before they can carry out product testing and certification. The four parties will crack down on counterfeit LONGi products from the source, protecting the rights and interests of customers and ensuring the sustainable development of LONGi's pan-



els business, and working together to build a healthy business environment for Pakistan's PV market. Photovoltaic power generation, as the best choice to solve Pakistan's power shortage and optimize its energy structure to a great extent based on fossil fuels, while saving foreign exchange required for energy imports, has vast potential for future development. From 2012 to 2022, LONGi produced a total of 290GW of photovoltaic products, with the cumulative output of clean electricity exceeding 1,148,287 GWh. According to the International Ener-

gy Agency's global power grid average emission factor, it is equivalent to avoiding 536 million tons of carbon dioxide emissions. As for Pakistani market, both distributed and centralized PV products have market segment demand, distributed PV systems, such as rooftop solar installations on residential, commercial, and industrial buildings, have been gaining popularity in Pakistan. Majid mentioned that net metering policies and incentives have been introduced to promote distributed generation and allow consumers to offset

their electricity bills by exporting excess power back to the grid. In recent years, the Pakistani government has successively formulated a number of related policies, thus the country's photovoltaic industry has shown good development potential. According to Pakistan's long-term power plan - the Indicative Generation Capacity Expansion Plan (IGCEP), the cumulative installed capacity of photovoltaics will reach 12%, or 13.2GW, by 2030, and the government will continue to provide maximum support for renewable energy projects.

Chinese county eyeing
exchange of agri
products with Pakistan

The place is endowed with superior natural conditions to develop tea industry, which is further empowered through integration with tourism and health industries

HANZHONG: Officials of Mian County, an agriculture-based county in Shaanxi Province in northwestern China, is discussing with Pakistani counterpart about the exchange of agricultural products. According to China Economic Net (CEN), the exchange will be based on the local specialties of the two sides, such as Chinese medicine and black tea and Pakistani mango and rice. Apart from the barter trade of agricultural products, the exchange of high-yield crop varieties shall also be included in the cooperation. The cooperation is expected to start from the southern areas of Pakistan, especially Sindh, Abdul Ghaffar Shar, a postdoc research fellow of Northwest A&F University who has been facilitating the cooperation told CEN. For example, Sukkur or Khairpur is suitable for the cultivation of Chinese medicine, and Larkana provides fertile soil for rice, he added. Chinese medicine and tea industries are two pillars of agricultural development in Mian County. Once an impoverished place, the county has witnessed over 50,000 people lifted out of poverty by leveraging its agricultural resources. With over 20 Chinese medicine processing companies across the county, it is processing over 3600 tons of Chinese herbal medicine with annual sales of more than 47 million yuan. Hanzhong City where Mian County is located is one of the earliest places to plant tea in China. Over one million local people are engaged in the production, operation, and service of the tea industry. Currently, there are over 200,000 acres of tea gardens in the city, producing 64,000 tons of tea leaves annually worth over 37 billion yuan. High latitude, high altitude, high probability of cloud, soil rich in zinc and selenium, and free from pollution... The place is endowed with superior natural conditions to develop tea industry, which is further empowered through integration with tourism and health industries. According to Abdul Ghaffar Shar, the prospective county-to-county agricultural cooperation gives better play to the advantages of the two sides and facilitates Pakistan to benefit from China's experience in agricultural development. —DNA

Jakarta set to procure
electric-powered
official cars

NEWS DESK

JAKARTA: The Jakarta provincial government is currently procuring electric-powered official vehicles in an effort to help improve the air quality of the capital city. Acting Governor of DKI Jakarta, Heru Budi Hartono, stated in Jakarta on Sunday that the procurement is in line with the Regional Development Plan. "In the near future, vehicles powered by renewable energy will be put into operation," he said. He added that some public transportation, such as buses in Jakarta, already use electric engines. According to Hartono, the use of electric vehicles reduces fossil fuel consumption and decreases carbon emissions. "Therefore, in the future, only heavy machinery like backhoes will still use oil-based fuel," he said. He encouraged the people of Jakarta not to hesitate to use electric vehicles or conventional vehicles, especially motorcycles, that have been converted to electric propulsion. "I am confident that in the near future, all two-wheeled vehicles in Jakarta will switch to electric motorcycles. We are considering incentive programs for the public to make this happen," said Hartono. He admitted to using a hybrid car as his official vehicle after serving as the acting governor for nine months. "I have only been using the hybrid car for a week. I think it is just as comfortable as regular fuel-powered vehicles," he said.

Brain-computer interfaces
technology showcased at AMNC

DNA

TIANJIN: Brain-computer interfaces (BCIs) technology was showcased at the Tiankai Higher Education Innovation Park of the 14th Annual Meeting of the New Champions (AMNC). Humans controlling machines with their minds may sound like stuff of science fiction movies. Imagine if you could prepare for your next meeting using only your thoughts - a scenario that might soon become a reality thanks to the development of brain-computer interfaces (BCIs), according to China Economic Net (CEN). BCI technology, such miracle is no longer the future; it is here and now. Advanced technology on BCI was showcased at the Tiankai Higher Education Innovation Park of the 14th Annual Meeting of the New Champions (AMNC)

held in Tianjin, China in the recent week. Neuro Engineering Team of Tianjin University, China, drawing on the neuroplasticity mechanism, has developed the "Shengong" rehabilitation robot based on brain-machine interface technology for patients with limb movement dysfunction. Shengong, the world's first neuromodulated powered exoskeleton system, is applied for the neurological rehabilitation of patients with stroke and other lower limb dysfunction. CEN reporter learns that the system can accurately decode the patient's motor intention and transmit it to external feedback devices, thus forming a closed-loop brain-machine-body pathway, thereby effectively solving the problems, namely poor initiative, and long treatment period in traditional rehabilitation. Brain Talker, the world's first dedicated codec chip for brain-computer interface, wowed visitors on site. It is



capable of decoding instructions precisely and effectively and realizing fast communication, and strong interaction, with completely independent intellectual property rights. present, the system has been applied to clinical research in many hospitals, the team noted, adding that their other BCI

products like brain-controlled typing system and intelligent diagnosis robot for depression turned out to be highly effective. BCI is a human-computer interaction device that converts nervous central information into commands that can control external software or hardware.

\$3b IMF deal to help achieve 2.5% GDP growth

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Industrial and Traders Associations Front (PIAF) Chairman Faheem Rehman Saigol has said that the new \$3 billion agreement with the IMF will help the economy stabilize and achieve GDP growth of 2.5% in the new fiscal year of 2023-24, taking the country's foreign reserves to \$14 billion. Faheem Rehman Saigol said that the news comes as a major breakthrough for government that ran from pillar to post to meet conditions of the Washington-based lender only to see an incessant delay on a successful completion of the ninth review. During this time, the public was alienated, heavy taxes were imposed, and questions were raised on Pakistan's debt obligations.

He said that the IMF Executive Board is likely to meet by mid-July to formally approve the new arrangement with Pakistan. The new facility also unlocks access to capital markets for Pakistan, opening up avenues for lending as it looks to finance its external funding gap. Pakistan has budgeted \$1.5 billion as a Eurobond and Sukuk for fiscal year 2023-24. This amount is likely to be dependent on the rates it is offered in the international market. Pakistan's foreign exchange reserves, currently under \$4 billion, are likely to get a boost as Saudi Arabia, UAE, and other bilateral partners also come through. This is a fresh nine-month program, implying that to move forward, there will be a new set of conditions to keep the SBA going. It gives some room to the government ahead of elections, and takes the onus

off the caretaker setup to take measures for the economy. The IMF will keep a close eye for the next nine months to ensure Pakistan does not sway from its economic measures. The key things it will look at will be the imposition of the petroleum development levy (the new ceiling is Rs60). The IMF acknowledged that Pakistan's economy faced several external shocks, but was quick to point out that there were some policy missteps including shortages from constraints on the functioning of the FX market. The IMF said the SBP should remain proactive to reduce inflation, and maintain a foreign exchange framework free of restrictions on payments and transfers for current international transactions and multiple currency practices. This could mean that the key policy rate is likely to remain high in the short-term, and anchored in-

flation will remain a priority. The PIAF Chairman said that the government needs to implement economic stabilization policies for a prolonged period to correct critical imbalances threatening its economic viability. He said that any deviation from the fiscal and monetary path agreed with the IMF will increase the cost during negotiations for the next loan tranche, and the new bailout package. The country cannot afford to have a large current account deficit in the current and next fiscal years, as the large deficits in the past have remained an important source for financing consumption-led economic growth. This accelerated the process of economic destabilization of Pakistan. He said that the government has committed to follow the real positive interest rate going forward, measured by headline inflation. In these challenging times, there is a need for quarterly reporting of the GDP

growth figures to reveal real economic patterns. The government, however, will face the challenge of dealing with low economic growth and high inflation - an outcome of politically motivated decisions taken by the successive governments during the past two years. Due to serious and critical imbalances threatening the country's economic viability, Pakistan cannot afford to roll out monetary and fiscal policies to achieve high economic growth rate in FY2023-24, starting from July. Under the domino effect of dollarization, the skyrocketing inflation, which is already in the midst of a decade-high level, along with the unprecedented rupee depreciation, high energy tariffs, escalating markup rate, rising commodity prices, fluctuating exchange-rate and balance-of-payment crisis, will lead to further hike in headline inflation, taking a toll on the local economy, he warned.

Briefs

Russian attacks in Ukraine leave 3 killed

DNA

KYIV: Ukrainian officials reported more civilian casualties from Russian shelling in the country's east and south on Saturday, as Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez began a visit to Kyiv as a show of continuing support from Madrid and the European Union for Ukraine's fight to dislodge invading Russian forces. In an address to Ukraine's parliament that received several standing ovations, Sánchez said, "We'll be with you as long as it takes." "I am here to express the firm determination of the European (Union) and Europe against the illegal and unjustified Russian aggression to Ukraine," he said on the day that Spain took over the six-month rotating presidency of the 27-nation EU. At a later news conference with President Volodymyr Zelensky, Sánchez announced Spain would deliver more heavy weaponry to Ukraine including four Leopard tanks and armored personnel carriers, as well as a portable field hospital. He also said Spain will provide an additional 55 million euros to help with reconstruction needs. Elsewhere in Ukraine, regional officials reported that at least three civilians were killed and 17 wounded by Russian shelling on Friday and overnight in the front-line eastern Donetsk region, where fierce battles are raging, Donetsk Gov. Pavlo Kyrylenko said.

Senate deputy chairman suggests 9 new provinces

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Senate Deputy Chairman Mirza Mohammad Afridi has suggested the formation of nine new provinces, one of which includes Karachi. Afridi made the recommendation in an interview on Dawn News' programme 'Doosra Rukh', which will be aired at 7pm today. Afridi, who is himself from the tribal districts, was elected to Senate as an independent candidate in 2018. He advocated for making Karachi, the erstwhile Federally Administered Tribal Areas (Fata) and the Hazara district provinces of their own as well as Punjab and Balochistan being divided into three provinces each. The Senate deputy chairman said: "Look at Balochistan, how vast its area is. There should be three provinces formed in Balochistan as well as three separate ones in Punjab." He urged for Karachi to be made an entirely separate province, adding that: "Fata should be made a separate province and one province should also be formed for Hazara." Afridi further said the more provinces Pakistan has, the better it will be.

France unrest appears to be ebbing; over 700 held

President Emmanuel Macron postponed a state visit to Germany that was due to begin on Sunday to handle the worst crisis for his leadership since the "yellow vest" protests paralysed much of France in late 2018

NEWS DESK

PARIS: France faced fifth night of rioting over teenager's killing by police, but intensity of violence appears to be subsiding. Young rioters clashed with police overnight and targeted a mayor's home with a burning car as France faced a fifth night of unrest sparked by the police killing of a teenager of North African descent, but overall violence appeared to lessen compared with previous nights. Police had made more than 700 arrests nationwide by early Sunday after a mass security deployment aimed at quelling France's worst social upheaval in years. Tens of thousands of police were deployed in cities across the country on Saturday after the funeral of Nahel M. President Emmanuel Macron postponed a state visit to Germany that was due to begin on Sunday to handle the worst crisis for his leadership since the "yellow vest" protests paralysed much of France in late 2018. "I'm not sure if the resolute action of the security forces," Interior Minister Gerald Darmanin tweeted early on Sunday. However, the mayor of Paris said rioters in France rammaged a car into the home of the mayor of a town south of Paris. Mayor Vincent Jeanbrun wrote on Twitter that protesters "rammed a car" into his home, before "setting a fire". "My wife and one of my children were injured," he said. Some 45,000 police were on the streets with specialised elite units, armoured vehicles and helicopters brought in to reinforce its three largest cities, Paris, Lyon and Marseille. As of 1:45am (23:45 GMT, Saturday), although the situation was calmer than the

Iran urges France 'to end violent treatment'

TEHRAN: Iran called on the French government Sunday to "end the violent treatment of its people" following a wave of rioting triggered by the police killing of a teenager. Foreign Ministry spokesman Nasser Kanani on Twitter also urged Iranian citizens to "refrain from making unnecessary trips to France" and told those already there to avoid "conflict areas", warning of the "insecure and unpredictable situation". France has been rocked by a major wave of violent street protests sparked by the fatal police shooting of a 17-year-old of Algerian origin, identified only as Nahel M., in the Paris suburb of Nanterre on Tuesday. The government has deployed tens of thousands of security forces and made hundreds of arrests as rioters have ransacked shops and torched buildings and vehicles in multiple cities. Kanani said "The French government is expected to put an end to the violent treatment of its people by respecting principles based on human dignity, freedom of speech and the right of citizens to peaceful protests". The unrest in France has made headlines in newspapers in the Islamic republic, which was hit last year by nationwide protests and launched a major crackdown on what authorities labelled "riots". - APP

previous four nights, there was still some tension in central Paris and sporadic clashes took place in the Mediterranean cities of Marseille, Nice and the eastern city of Strasbourg. The biggest flashpoint was in Marseille where police fired tear gas and fought street battles with youths around the city centre late into the night. In Paris, police increased security at the city's landmark Champs-Élysées Avenue after a call on social media to gather there. The street, usually packed with tourists, was lined with security forces carrying out spot checks. Shop facades were boarded up to prevent potential damage and pillaging. Police said 719 people were arrested na-

tionwide on the fifth night of rioting. The interior ministry said 1,311 people had been arrested on Friday night, compared with 875 the previous night, although it described the violence as "lower in intensity". Local authorities all over the country announced bans on demonstrations, ordered public transport to stop running in the evening and some imposed overnight curfews. Rioters have torched 2,000 vehicles since the start of the unrest. More than 200 police officers have been injured, Darmanin said on Saturday, adding that the average age of those arrested was 17. More than 700 shops, supermarkets, restaurants and bank branches had been "ran-

sacked, looted and sometimes even burned to the ground since Tuesday", Finance Minister Bruno Le Maire said.

Nahel, a 17-year-old son of Algerian and Moroccan parents, was shot by a police officer during a traffic stop on Tuesday in the Paris suburb of Nanterre. For the funeral, several hundred people lined up to enter Nanterre's grand mosque. Volunteers in yellow vests stood guard while a few dozen bystanders watched from across the street. The shooting of the teenager, caught on video, has reignited longstanding complaints by poor and racially mixed urban communities of police violence and racism. Nahel was known to police for previously failing to comply with traffic stop orders and was illegally driving a rental car, the Nanterre prosecutor said on Thursday. Macron has denied there is systemic racism in French law enforcement agencies.

Fifteen-year-old Dgibril, a French citizen, told Al Jazeera in Paris that he was searched twice on Saturday, apparently because of his skin colour.

"I was walking around the Champs-Élysée with friends. As soon as we got here, we got stopped and searched. We stayed, and five minutes later, I got searched again, and it just never stops," he said. "They are choosing who to search by the colour of their skin. It's always the same people being stopped." Salah, a tourist from Algeria, said his group was searched multiple times too. "We are tourists, just walking around. We don't know why they picked us, maybe because we look Arabs," Salah said. "They only stop Arabs and Blacks, white people - they let them go."

Israel launches missile attacks on Syria's Homs

WEB DESK

HOMS: Israel has launched air raids on Syria, aiming at locations near the government-held city of Homs, but Syrian air defences downed most of the missiles, according to a state media report. The SANA news agency, quoting an army statement early on Sunday, said the missiles flew over parts of Lebanon's capital, Beirut, before hitting locations in the vicinity of the city of Homs. They resulted only in material damage, SANA said. A spokesman for the Israeli military said its fighter jets had launched an attack on a Syrian air defence battery from which an anti-aircraft missile was launched towards Israel.

The jets also attacked other targets in the area, said Avichay Adrae. Earlier on Saturday, Adrae said on Twitter that the anti-aircraft missile launched from Syrian territory towards Israel had exploded in mid-air. There were no casualties, he said. Israel has in recent months intensified attacks on Syrian airports and air bases to disrupt Israel's increasing use of aerial supply lines to deliver arms to allies in Syria and Lebanon, including Lebanon's Hezbollah. The Israeli attacks are part of an escalation of what has been a years-long low-intensity conflict with a goal of slowing Iran's growing entrenchment in Syria, Israeli military experts say.

Russians reflect on Wagner's advance towards Moscow

NEWS DESK

MOSCOW: A week on from the dramatic mutiny by Wagner forces, residents in Rostov-on-Don - the city the mercenary troops seized - have been reflecting on the events that rocked Russia. In just 24 hours, leader of the Wagner group, Yevgeny Prigozhin, staged an insurrection, sending troops into the city of a million people and further on towards Moscow. Due to the current laws against criticising the so-called "special military operation" in Russia, the BBC has chosen to protect the identities of the citizens who spoke to us. One Rostov-on-Don local - who the BBC is calling Vadim - described the moment he spotted Wagner forces in the city. "I had to leave my home that day just to pop out and get something from the shop. About ten or eleven, I saw these armed

people that had closed off the road. They were checking cars, asking people for documents but passers-by were simply allowed to carry on walking," he told the BBC World Service's Weekend programme. When Vadim got home, he started receiving calls from worried friends asking him if he was okay. He decided to stay at home for the rest of the day. "If I am to speak of the feelings I experienced that day, I suppose you could say I was alarmed and perhaps even scared. We knew that Prigozhin had planned to do something and Wagner is known for its crimes in various countries. "The association that we have of Wagner killing someone with a sledgehammer caused me to be afraid," he added. Vadim says the war in Ukraine has changed the city completely. Its become more militarised and has a number of military hospitals and wounded people.

Baltimore: two dead and 28 injured in mass casualty event

WEB DESK

BALTIMORE: Two people have been killed and another 28 injured in the US city of Baltimore, police say. A spokesman said that three people remained in a critical condition. The incident happened in the Brooklyn Homes area in the south of the city in the state of Maryland, where people had gathered for an event called "Brooklyn Day". Fox News reports that 20 to 30 shots were fired. There are no details yet about the shooter. All victims were adults. Nine of them were transported by ambulance while 20 others walked into area hospitals with injuries from the shooting, Worley said.

An 18-year-old woman was found dead at the scene and a 20-year-old man was pronounced dead at a hospital shortly after, police said. Hundreds of people had gathered in the area for an event called "Brooklyn Day", a witness told TV station Fox 45, adding that they had heard 20 to 30 gunshots. No arrests were made immediately after the shooting. Worley said the police were working to identify a suspect and determine a motive for the shooting. "This is an extensive crime scene, our detectives are going to be here quite a while," Worley said. Baltimore Mayor Brandon Scott, speaking to reporters at the crime scene, condemned the shooting.

JI demands Swedish envoy's expulsion

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: Jamaat-e-Islami Karachi Emir Hafiz Naeemur Rehman demanded the expulsion of the Swedish ambassador over desecration of the Holy Quran in Sweden. Addressing a press conference in Karachi, Hafiz Naeemur Rehman said that the desecration of the Holy Quran in Sweden was condemnable and the United Nations should take up the matter at once. He said Muslims treated people of all religions with respect. "Islam respects all other religions, no one can be forced into the religion, there is nothing more for us than the Holy Word," he added. The JI leader said that the government should expel the ambassador of Sweden, the West should know that the Holy Quran is a holy book. "Our lives are here for our Prophet and the Quran, the West should not insult, Jamaat-e-Islami condemns the Sweden incident," he said.

Israel to buy new fleet of F-35 jets by US aid

TEL AVIV: Israel will buy its third fleet of F-35 stealth fighter jets in a deal worth \$3bn that will be financed through US military aid, according to the Israeli military.

Israel's Ministry of Defence approved the purchase on Sunday, with the additional 25 aircraft manufactured by Lockheed Martin to bring the number of F-35 jets in Israel's air force to 75.

"This new agreement will ensure the continuation of cooperation between American companies and Israeli defence industries in the production of aircraft parts," the ministry said in a statement.

Israel was the first country outside the United States to acquire the F-35, and remains the only country in the Middle East to have the advanced weapon in its arsenal.

The United Arab Emirates has long sought to buy F-35 jets from the US, but the Gulf nation's ties to China have meant no deal has yet gone through. The fighter jet is considered the world's most advanced, capable of gathering intelligence, striking deep into enemy territory and engaging in air duels. It is also known as the Joint Strike Fighter and, in Israel, by its Hebrew name Adir, or Mighty. In May 2018, Israel said it was the first to use the F-35 in combat. - Agencies

President Arif Alvi shares 'affectionate smile' with MBS

DNA

RIYADH: President Arif Alvi on Saturday shared an all-smile picture of him standing with Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince and Prime Minister Mohammed bin Salman on the microblogging website, Twitter, which reflects the close bonds between Pakistan and the kingdom. Taking to his official Twitter handle, the president shared a photo of him sharing an affectional smile with the crown prince. President Alvi said that such expressions are very symbolic of a great relationship between the people of the two countries. He, in the tweet, wrote: "Very symbolic of the great relationship between the people of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. No better expression of the kinship than the beaming and affectionate smile on the faces of two brothers."

The president had been to KSA for performing Hajj. According to Saudi Press Agency, on behalf of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, MBS, crown prince and prime minister, held an annual ceremony the other day at the Royal Court, Mina Palace for the presidents, prime ministers, senior Islamic dignitaries, guests of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, guests of government agencies, and heads of delegations and offices of pilgrims affairs who performed Hajj this year. At the outset of the ceremony, the crown prince greeted King Abdullah Ri'ayatu'ddin Al-Mustafa Billah Shah of Malaysia and other world leaders.



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