



Islamabad POST

Saturday, August 05, 2023

Pakistan's Credible Daily Newspaper

Price Rs. 25

Trump pleads not guilty of plotting to overturn election

Detailed News On Page-08

Niger warns of fallout if coup succeeds

Detailed News On Page-07



Alex Hales announces retirement

Detailed News On Page-06



Briefs

Rs 2m for each victim of Bajaur blast

DNA



ISLAMABAD: Finance Minister Ishaq Dar says government will provide two million rupees to each victim family of Bajaur blast incident. Speaking in Senate on Friday, he said seven hundred thousand rupees will be given to the seriously injured whereas five hundred thousand will be given to the persons with minor injuries. Minister of State for Law and Justice Shahadat Awan says the government has established an Autism Centre in the premises of Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (PIMS) which has been operational since last six months. Answering during the Question Hour in the Senate, he said the services at the center offer daily OPD, diagnosis, analysis and management plan. He said speech therapist, psychiatrist, physiotherapist, pediatrician, audiology services are also readily available.

CPEC brings prosperity for entire region

NEWS DESK

BEIJING: Pakistan Ambassador to China, Moin ul Haque says China-Pakistan Economic Corridor project has brought peace, prosperity and development opportunities not only to Pakistan but also to the entire region. In an exclusive interview with China Daily, he said CPEC, which is fully aligned with Pakistan's development agenda, is an excellent example of an open, coordinated, and inclusive development paradigm that benefits all parts of the country and all segments of the society. He underlined the development of Gwadar Port as being central to the CPEC. The port is now operational and is ready to serve as a hub for trade and investment.

Holiday Notice

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

- Editor

Inside...

Anti polio drive from August 7th - Page 02

Malaysian envoy hosts reception for former MTCP participants - Page 03

US Embassy rewards innovation in Pakistan - Page 04

Will India's future generations forgive its decay into anti-Muslim hatred? - Page 05

Pakistan-Korea match ends in a 1-1 draw - Page 06

Alvi urges business community to help uplift deprived segments - Page 07

Ukrainian drones hit key Russian port, damage ship - Page 08

Toshakhana case IHC voids lower court's July 8 verdict

IHC issues notice against court's decision to reject witnesses, asks FIA to probe judge's alleged Facebook post

COURT REPORTER

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) Friday declared the sessions court's maintainability verdict in the Toshakhana case against Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan "void". IHC Chief Justice Amir Farooq gave the court's ruling on eight petitions of the PTI chairman after arguments by both parties - which were completed on Thursday while the judgment was reserved. The court, however, rejected the PTI chairman's request to transfer the case to another court and said that Additional Sessions Judge Humayun Dilawar would hear the case. The IHC also issued a notice against the court's decision to reject the list of witnesses. Regarding the district and session judge's alleged Facebook post, the court directed the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) to probe into the issue. On October 21, 2022, the Election Commission of Pakistan maintained that the former prime minister made "false statements and incorrect declarations" about the gifts and disqualified him under Article 63(1)(p) of the Constitution. Subsequently, the election watchdog moved the sessions court to the federal capital. It sought criminal proceedings against the ECP chief for allegedly misleading the ECP regarding gifts received from foreign dignitaries while he was in office. The PTI chairman was indicted in the case on May 10,

Continued on Page 06

Trial court summons Imran Khan today

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Following a short order issued by the Islamabad High Court (IHC), a district and sessions court in the federal capital on Friday summoned former prime minister Imran Khan in his personal capacity today (Saturday) in the Toshakhana case. The trial court in Islamabad resumed hearing the Toshakhana reference filed by the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) against the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chairman as the IHC set aside the sessions court's previous ruling in the case today. In his short order, IHC Chief Justice Aamer Farooq instructed the local court to decide the matter again after hearing the case. At the outset of hearing, the local court's judge Humayun Dilawar asked Barrister Gohar Ali - Imran Khan's counsel - about updates on the case in the high court. "After approving the plea

Continued on Page 06

Khaqan, Bhootani 'among candidates' for interim PM

Coalition partners held a Zoom meeting to exchange views; PML N sends five names to Nawaz Sharif for picking up of any three



SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: The names of former prime minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi and independent lawmaker from Balochistan Aslam Bhootani among others are being considered for the caretaker prime minister, it emerged Friday. Sources confided that ex-finance minister Hafeez Sheikh and Fawad Hassan Fawad, ex-principal secretary to Nawaz Sharif, are also among those that will be discussed in a meeting of allied parties. According to details, as the government nears its term, coalition partners held a Zoom meeting to exchange views on the caretaker

Continued on Page 06

'NA to be dissolved on August 9'

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday told his coalition partners that the summary to dissolve the National Assembly would be moved on August 9, sources told media. The assurance was given by the premier during a dinner he hosted for his coalition partners during which the political situation of the country and general elections was discussed. Officials, who were privy to the meeting and spoke on the condition of anonymity, said that the premier informed his coalition partners that he would begin consultations with Opposition Leader in the National Assembly Raja Riaz on a caretaker prime minister from today (Friday). The premier added that he is hopeful that the

Continued on Page 06

Pak Army will continue to support young talent: COAS

Lauds Hamza Khan for doing wonders in the field of Squash

STAFF REPORT

RAWALPINDI: Chief of Army Staff General Syed Asim Munir on Friday congratulated World Junior Squash Champion Mohammad Hamza Khan for his outstanding achievement and for bringing honour to the country, a statement issued by the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said. According to the military's media wing,

Continued on Page 06



DNA



RAWALPINDI: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif along with Services Chiefs and Federal Ministers offering dua after inaugurating National Aerospace Science and Technology Park in Rawalpindi. - DNA

Kashmiris to observe Youm-e-Istehsal

A walk will be held at Constitution Avenue, which will start from Foreign Office and culminate at D-Chowk

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: Kashmiris on the both sides of the Line of Control and world over will observe Youm-e-Istehsal tomorrow to send a clear message to New Delhi government that Kashmiris outrightly reject actions taken by Modi-led Indian government on August 5, 2019 and illegal occupation of their homeland. Scores of events including seminars, protest rallies, screening video documentaries, photo exhibitions exposing Indian brutalities on Kashmiri people, have been organized across the country by the Ministry of Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit Baltistan in collaboration

Continued on Page 06

Promoting tourism urged PM for converting scenic beauty into opportunities

Says will encourage our brotherly countries to come to Pakistan

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif inaugurated "Salam Pakistan" brand and "e-Portal" at a ceremony held in Islamabad on Friday to promote tourism in Pakistan. Speaking on the occasion, he said Pakistan is a great place for promoting tourism, culture and heritage. He said we will encourage our brotherly countries and the countries, which have excelled in the field of tourism, culture, handcraft and other fields, to come to Pakistan and highlight this diversity of tourism sector. The PM said Pakistan is blessed with great natural resources and scenic beauty all over the northern areas, which can be converted into the great opportunities to promote tourism in the country. The "Salam Pakistan" brand and "e-Portal" will help portray Pakistan's diversity in tourism at international level and increase tourists' interest from across the world in this sector.

National Aerospace S&T Park inaugurated

MEHTAB PIRZADA

RAWALPINDI: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has inaugurated National Aerospace Science and Technology Park in Rawalpindi to promote research, development and innovation in the aviation, space, Information Technology and cyber domains. Addressing the inaugural ceremony on Friday, he said this initiative will fit well in the scheme of Special Investment Facilitation Council for development of agriculture, aviation, science and technology sectors.

Continued on Page 06



ADDING TO OUR HERITAGE CIRCUIT



SERENA ALTIT FORT RESIDENCE

For booking enquiries please call: +92 (58) 13 457 692-4 or email at reservation.saf@serena.com.pk

Anti polio drive from August 7th

OUR CORRESPONDENT

PESHAWAR Emergency Operations Center Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is all set to conduct Sub-National Immunization Drive (SNID) in selected districts of the province from August 07, 2023 wherein over 2.72 million eligible children will be vaccinated against the crippling virus at their doorsteps. During this polio vaccination drive titled Sub-National Immunization Days/ Outbreak Response (SNID/OBR), teams will administer Oral Polio Vaccine (OPV) to all eligible children under five in eight complete and nine partial districts of the province while in district Peshawar and Khyber fractional dose of Inactivated Polio Vaccine (fIPV) will also be administered to children falling in the age bracket of 4 months to 59 months to further boost their immunity against polio virus and protect them from lifelong paralysis. The decision to this effect was taken in a high-level meeting chaired by Additional Secretary Health for Polio Eradication/EOC Coordinator Muhammad Asif Rahim here in Provincial Emergency Operations Center (PEOC) on Friday. The meeting was attended by Deputy Coordinator EOC Muhammad Zeeshan Khan, team leads UNICEF, WHO & NSTOP, officials of health department and other relevant stakeholders. The meeting was informed that during



this campaign polio drops will be administered to 2,466,828 children under the age of five in eight complete districts of the province including district Hangu, Kohat, Peshawar, Khyber, Nowshera, Charsadda, Mohmand and Bannu whereas over 92,242 children will be inoculated in Afghan Refugee Camps in district Buner, Lower Chitral, Lower Dir, Haripur, Mansehra, Malakand, Mardan and Swabi while 161,305 children will be vaccinated in 11 selected union councils of North Waziristan and 14 union councils of Haripur. Addressing the meeting, Additional Secretary Health for Polio Eradication/EOC Coordinator, Muhammad Asif Rahim said that conducting frequent polio vaccination campaigns in the province demonstrates the governments firm resolve to eradicate the menace from the region with the technical guidance and support of partners. He stressed upon all segments of society particularly parents, elders, religious scholars, civil society and the media to come

forward and extend their full support and cooperation to the national cause of polio eradication for the success of these campaigns so that the dream of a polio-free Pakistan may come true. Asif Rahim informed that innovative operational and communication strategies have been introduced for the first time by provincial emergency operations center by launching the bikers strategy, ring strategy, Enhanced Outreach Activity (EOA) strategy and reaching the unreached strategy to ensure vaccination of all eligible children in the province.

The meeting was informed that 6947 teams of trained polio workers including 6106 mobile teams, 448 fixed teams, 349 transit teams and 44 roaming teams have been deployed for the implementation of this campaign. Besides 1,598 area in-charges have also been appointed for the vigilant supervision of these teams to make sure that all children in the target areas are administered with polio drops. Likewise, it was told that 3,728 teams of skilled polio vaccinators and assistants, and 3638 community mobilizers have been assigned the task of administering injectable polio vaccines to children aged four to 59 months in District Khyber and Peshawar.

In order to ensure foolproof security of the polio teams, 18, 474 security personnel have been deployed in the target areas, the meeting was told.



ISLAMABAD: Advisor to the Prime Minister on Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit Baltistan Qamar Zaman Kaira and All Parties Hurriyat Conference leadership posing for a picrue during conference regarding Youm e Istehsal Kashmir. —DNA

PFA confiscates 235kg tainted spices

LAHORE: The Punjab Food Authority (PFA) has confiscated 235 kilograms tainted and substandard spices during a raid on Kareem Spices Unit in Dalgiran Bazaar, Kasur. PFA Director General Raja Jahangir Anwar said on Friday that the team confiscated 160kg of turmeric powder, 75kg of red chilli and non-food grade colour besides discarding 120kg of prohibited ingredients. He said that the authority took action against the food point over the failure of their food sample results in the laboratory test. The raiding team found contamination of prohibited colours, bran (choker), rice flour and other harmful ingredients in the chilli. He further said that turmeric mixed with bran was to be supplied to different local shops in the market. He said that the use of contaminated spices causes stomach and intestine problems. Moreover, he appealed to the public to read the writing on the label before purchasing any foodstuff and avoid purchasing loose spices. —APP

ATC extends judicial remand of Dr Yasmin

LAHORE: An anti-terrorism court (ATC) on Friday extended the judicial remand of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Dr Yasmin Rashid for another 13 days in a case of blocking roads and delivering a speech against institutions. Earlier, the police produced Dr Yasmin Rashid before ATC Judge Abher Gul Khan on expiry of her judicial remand. The investigation officer submitted that the case challan was being prepared and it would be filed after completion. He pleaded with the court to extend the judicial remand of the PTI leader. At this, the court extended the judicial remand for another 13 days and directed for producing Dr Yasmin Rashid on August 17. —APP

CM Naqvi chairs LDA's governing body meeting

LAHORE: Punjab Caretaker Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi chaired the third governing body meeting of the Lahore Development Authority (LDA) at his office which approved LDA's surplus budget for the financial year 2023-24. The collective budget for the three major projects, i.e., UD Wing, WASA and TEPA was also approved, totaling more than 78.66 billion rupees. The meeting approved the construction of additional U-turns in Shahrah-e-Nazaria Pakistan to ease traffic congestion. The repair and maintenance of roads was linked to an effective water drainage system. Approval

was given for the construction of Akbar Chowk flyover, and an agreement was reached to utilize the old vegetable and fruit market land, adjoining the Arfa Karim Tower, for better purposes. Furthermore, approvals were given for the renovation and operational management of mosques in Mohlanwal, Jubilee Town and LDA Avenue-1 housing schemes. An instruction was given to reimburse the 4.5 million proposed fees from the model bazaar management company in Johar Town. A review of the NOCs for petrol pumps in Lahore was carried out and the permission for

apartments for registered members of the New Pakistan Housing Department in the LDA City Housing Scheme was also discussed. A committee was formed to address the sewerage infrastructure charges for private housing societies. The CM ordered the establishment of a technical department in LDA and stressed the need to expedite the repair and maintenance work on city roads. The meeting was attended by the secretary finance, secretary housing, commissioner Lahore/ DG LDA, MD WASA, Addl DG (Housing), Addl DG (HQ), Chief Engineer LDA and others. —APP

FBR's decision of introducing new rules for tracking hailed

PESHAWAR: Director Pak-Afghan Joint Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PAJCCI), Zia ul Haq Sarhadi has hailed the issuance of notification by Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) for introducing new Tracking and Monitoring of Cargo Rule 2023. In a press statement issued here on Friday, Zia Sarhadi said that the decision was a long demand of the business community of the country aimed at ending the monopoly of one company providing tracking service to vehicles carrying cargo goods. It merits to mention here that FBR has issued SR0996(I)/2023 to notify new Tracking and Monitoring of Cargo Rules, 2023 on August 2. The FBR has allowed companies having a minimum annual turnover of Rs175 million or financial worth of Rs100 million to obtain the licence for tracking and monitoring of vehicles and containers carrying transit/imported cargo. Under the new rules, the annual turnover has been reduced from Rs350 million to Rs175 million and financial health from Rs200 million to Rs100 million for the companies intending to apply for the licenses for tracking and monitoring of vehicles and containers carrying transit cargo. "Relaxation in annual turnover and financial health for intending companies will provide an opportunity for more firms to come in the arena and provide quality service," Zia opined. Presently, he said, the lone company is charging containers exorbitantly due to the lack of any other option for businessmen for switching over to another tracking company. Director PAJCCI expressed the hope that FBR will undertake the bidding process on its scheduled time in September 2023 and fulfill other official requirements expediently for engaging new companies in the tracking process. He thanked the Chairman FBR for taking this decision which after implementation, will provide relaxation to the business community and introduce the provision of state-of-the-art and competitive tracking and monitoring service to importers and exporters. The decision will also expedite the passage and clearance of goods-laden containers at ports which usually get delay due to different reasons and businessmen have to bear the brunt of paying extra payments under the heads of detention charges and demurrages, he expressed. —APP

Caretaker govt to hold general election within 90 days as per Constitution

PESHAWAR: Pakistan Democratic Movement Head and Central Ameer of Jamiat Ulema Islam, Maulana Fazlur Rehman here Friday said that caretaker government would hold general election within 90 days after completion of constitutional tenure of the present assemblies this month. He said August 9, 2023 would be the last day of the present assemblies and the Government and later ECP and Caretaker Govt would conduct free and transparent elections within the constitutional time. Addressing the grand tribal jirga meeting attended by senior leadership of religious and political parties here and later talking to media, Maulana Fazlur Rehman said that people of this region has a long history of bravery that frustrated nefarious designs of aggressors in the past. He underscored the need to forge unity as nation against all external and internal challenges. Fazl said that he had visited hospitals to inquire health of Bajaur blast victims, adding our committed workers are real asset of the party and their sacrifices would not go waste. The grand jirga proposed convening of all parties conference on the existing situation developed after explosions in ajaur and Khyber districts recently. He called for an inclusive strategy to enhance cooperation between Pakistan and Afghanistan to eradicate menace of terrorism. He demanded establishment of a high level committee to review the situation developed after Bajaur blast and decisive action against terrorism. —APP

TENDER NOTICE

PROCUREMENT OF LOCAL PURCHASE OF PRINTING AND PUBLICATIONS STATIONARY ITEMS AND X-RAY DEPARTMENT FILMS/ITEMS UNDER FRAMEWORK CONTRACT FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 2023-24

Package	Detail of Tender	Estimated Cost	Bid Security
01	Framework Contract for Printing & Publication Items	25,00,000/-	2% of estimated cost i.e. 50,000/- PKR
02	Framework Contract for Stationery Items	400,000/-	2% of estimated cost i.e. 8,000/- PKR
03	Framework Contract for X-Ray films and Chemicals	15,00,000/-	2% of estimated cost i.e. 30,000/- PKR

Bidding documents containing the detailed specifications can be obtained @ Rs. 10004 (nom refundable) from office of Medical Superintendent, THQ Hospital Murree on written request. From under mentioned address during office hours. The Last date for submission of bids long with bid security mentioned in bidding documents is 22 August 2023 till 11:00 am and will be opened on the same day at 11:30 am at below mentioned address in the presence the bidders who may like to attend the tender opening meeting. Submission of any false tement/documents shall disqualify the bidder. All tender process will be completed according to RA Rules 2014 amended up to date. Taxes will be deducted as per applicable government rules. Nand Sales Tax registration certificate must be provided.

Medical Superintendent
THQ Hospital Murree
Contact Number #-: 051-9069076

IPL NO 6156

PSCA pays tribute to martyrs on Police Martyrs' Day

LAHORE: The Punjab Safe Cities Authority (PSCA) released a special video on the Police Martyrs' Day on Friday, which is dedicated to the heroic sacrifices, made by the Punjab Police employees. The video highlights unwavering dedication of the brave officers, who laid down their lives to protect and preserve safety and wellbeing of their fellow citizens. The video featured heartwarming conversations with the families of the martyred policemen, including children, mothers, and parents. The bereaved mother of a martyred captain shares her heartfelt feelings, exemplifying the immense sacrifices made by the courageous officers and the profound impact on their families. —DNA

Malaysia to open trade office in Karachi, commence direct flights

KARACHI: Consul General of Malaysia, Herman Hardynata Bin Ahmad, on Friday, said that his country was keen to enhance trade and investment ties with Pakistan and efforts were underway to open a trade office in Karachi and commencing direct flights from Kuala Lumpur. An 18-member Malaysian trade delegation, comprising representatives from food, agriculture, cosmetics, textiles and other sectors, will be arriving in Karachi next week to explore possibilities of enhancing trade ties, he informed during his visit to the Karachi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI). The consul general said that Malaysian trade office will be activated in Karachi by the end of the year and presence of Malaysian trade representative would result in improving trade ties with the business community of Karachi which is

very important to Malaysia. A Malaysian Airline will also be commencing direct flights between Kuala Lumpur and Karachi for promoting trade ties and also opening up tourism opportunities, he further said adding that efforts were being made to timely complete all the formalities for the direct flights by the end of this year. Referring to Pakistan Malaysia Free Trade Agreement (FTA) he said that FTA between the two countries was being refreshed by adding more tradable items in the lists which would help increasing trade volume between the two brotherly countries. Herman Hardynata urged the business community to take advantage of the immense opportunities of exporting goods to Malaysia as a lot of goods being manufactured in Karachi would find a very good market in Malaysia. On the matter of visa-free access

to Malaysia, the Envoy said that visa free facility was usually a reciprocal arrangement between countries so if Malaysia and Pakistan mutually agree, the visa free facility can be arranged. Currently, all the visa applications for visiting Malaysia are processed within 48 hours and even earlier than that in case of emergency, he informed. President KCCI Mohammed Tariq Yousof, in his remarks, stressed on enhancing trade volume of the two countries and said that the bilateral trade volume was far below its full potential as Pakistan's exports to Malaysia were just around \$300 million. He pointed out that Pakistan's trade volume with the ASEAN bloc was around \$9 billion while Pakistan and ASEAN countries could further deepen cooperation in various areas such as transport, energy, communications. —APP

Pakistan's abiding commitment to Kashmir cause reaffirmed

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's strong solidarity with the Kashmiri people and abiding commitment to the just cause of Kashmir was reaffirmed at a Seminar organized by the India Study Center (ISC) at the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI), in connection with Youm-e-Istehsal (5 August). The speakers highlighted the historical, legal, human rights, and strategic aspects of the Jammu and Kashmir dispute. The Seminar, titled "August 5, 2019 - Assault on Kashmiri Rights and Identity Continues Unabated", was attended by a large number of diplomats, academics, researchers, students, members of the civil society, and representatives

of the media. The distinguished speakers included: Member, Independent Permanent Human Rights Commission (IPHRC) of the OIC, Ambassador Tasnim Aslam; former Minister for Social Welfare and Women Development, Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) Ms. Farzana Yaqoob; Executive Director, Research Society of International Law (RSIL), Mr. Jamal Aziz; Chairman, Kashmir Institute of International Relations (KIIR), Mr. Altaf Hussain Wani; and Convener, Tehreek Hurriyet Jammu, and Kashmir, Mr. Ghulam Muhammad Safi, were the distinguished speakers of the occasion. Advisor to the Prime Minister on Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit Baltistan, Mr. Qamar Zaman Kaira, was the chief guest. In his introductory remarks, Acting

Director ISC Malik Qasim Mustafa, highlighted that since 1947, when India illegally occupied the State of Jammu and Kashmir, India's atrocities and denial of justice to the Kashmiri people were continuing unabated. The 5th August 2019 assault by India on Kashmiri rights and identity and inhumane military siege and brutality of Indian security forces had further accentuated the sufferings of the Kashmiri people. Underscoring the importance of relevant UN Security Council resolutions, he stressed that the international community had a responsibility to facilitate peaceful solution of the Jammu and Kashmir dispute. In his remarks, DG ISSI Ambassador Sohail Mahmood stated that 5th August - another 'Black Day' in history.

Ahsan Iqbal applauded PIDE's efforts in expanding its research network

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE) was thrilled to announce the successful Ground Breaking Ceremony of its own building, it marked a significant milestone in the institution's history. The ceremony took place on Friday, 4th August 2023, at Plot No 92 & 93, H-8/1, Islamabad.

PIDE, a renowned institution committed to fostering intellectual growth and socio-economic development in the country, was privileged to have the esteemed presence of the Honorable Minister of Planning Development & Special Initiatives, Prof. Ahsan Iqbal, who graced the occasion as the Chief Guest. During the Ground Breaking Ceremony, Prof. Ahsan Iqbal, the Honorable Minister of Planning Development & Special Initiatives & Chancellor of PIDE, in his address as a chief guest, emphasized the significance of PIDE as the nation's premier think tank, emphasizing that it goes beyond being just a building; it is an intellectual powerhouse and a crucible of ideas where brilliant minds converge to address the com-



plexities of Pakistan's economic challenges. He further underlined the institute's commitment to harnessing the power of intellect for an equitable and thriving future for the people of Pakistan. Research and innovation, the Chancellor asserted, hold the key to national progress and development. In today's rapidly evolving global landscape, research serves as a guiding compass, illuminating the path toward prosperity, sustainability, and societal

advancement. By unlocking new frontiers of knowledge and catalyzing transformative change, research empowers the nation to harness human ingenuity and creativity. The Chancellor acknowledged the pivotal role of economic research in shaping the future of nations worldwide. He emphasized that economic research at PIDE serves as a navigator for policymakers, guiding them toward informed choices

that align with the long-term interests of Pakistan. By fostering international cooperation and addressing global challenges, PIDE's research plays a significant role in contributing to a stable and harmonious global economy. Underlining the government's commitment to equipping Pakistan with an intellectual arsenal, the Chancellor outlined the "5 Es Strategy" focusing on increasing exports, building a knowledge economy, ad-

ressing environmental and climate change challenges, securing sustainable energy and infrastructure, and promoting equity and empowerment. PIDE's role in evidence-based research and carving better policies and strategies was highlighted as pivotal in addressing the challenges faced by the nation. The Chancellor applauded PIDE's efforts in expanding its research dissemination network through various social media platforms. —DNA

National Days and Armed Forces Days

August

Aug 01/China
Armed Forces Day

Aug 01/Switzerland
National Day

Aug 01/Lebanon
Armed Forces Day

Aug 01/Syria
Armed Forces Day

Aug 4/Burkina Faso
National Day

Aug 09/Singapore

Aug 15/DPR Korea
Independence Day

Aug 15/India
Independence Day

Aug 15/Poland
Armed Forces Day

Aug 17/Indonesia
Independence Day

Aug 24/Ukraine
Independence Day

Aug 25/Uruguay
Independence Day

Aug 30/Turkey
Armed Forces Day

Aug 31/Kyrgyz Republic
Independence Day

Aug 31/Malaysia
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



Hospitals

CMH.....9281992
MH.....561116
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

Malaysian envoy hosts reception for former MTCP participants

High Commissioner Mohammad Azhar Mazlan says Malaysia sees MTCP as integral towards strengthening mutually beneficial bilateral relations

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The High Commissioner of Malaysia to Pakistan Mohammad Azhar Mazlan hosted a dinner reception for the former participants of the Malaysian Technical Cooperation Program (MTCP). A large number of former MTCP participants attended the dinner reception. The Additional Secretary Asia Pacific Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Pakistan Ameer Khurram Rathore also attended the event. The Malaysian High Commissioner in his speech welcomed the guests and shared salient features of the program. He said the purpose of the event was to establish closer relations and strengthen networking between the High Commission of Malaysia in Islamabad and former MTCP participants, particularly from Pakistan. Malaysia attaches great importance to its bilateral relations with Pakistan. The long standing bilateral relations and close cooperation

DNA



between our two brotherly countries have covered various areas in trade, investment, education, tourism, culture, defence and technical assistance on human capital development.

He added, the MTCP reflects Malaysia's commitment to South-South cooperation, particularly technical cooperation and formulated based on Malaysia's principle that the develop-

ment of a country depends on the quality of its human resources. In addition, Malaysia sees MTCP as integral towards strengthening mutually beneficial bilateral relations. He

highlighted that the Malaysian High Commission is planning to offer more courses in various sectors for Pakistan. The envoy reiterated the Malaysian High Commission's commit-

ment to sharing developmental experiences and expertise by providing various human capacity-building program and technical assistance to Pakistan. "Hopefully the MTCP participants would utilise the knowledge and experience to further contribute for the betterment of Pakistan," the Malaysian envoy added. It may be mentioned here that the MTCP emphasizes human resources development mainly through training and capacity-building courses including short-term courses at Malaysian public and private training institutions, and long-term courses at Malaysian public universities. Annually, Malaysia's flagship MTCP offers technical training and capacity-building programmes in vast areas of development in collaboration with leading local training institutions and international development partners. Malaysian Government aims to encourage more future participation from Pakistani officials in the MTCP, as it would not only be beneficial for the bilateral relations but it would also assist in the career development of the participants.

President directs UBL to refund Rs 79,500 with profit to fraud victim

Asks banks to remove flaws to prevent online fraud, educate customers about digital banking

DNA

ISLAMABAD: While directing United Bank Ltd (UBL) to refund defrauded amount along with profit to a fraud victim, President Dr Arif Alvi has asked banks to remove the inherent flaws in their systems to prevent online fraud and fraudulent transactions, and educate their customers about the pros and cons of online funds transfer facility before activating digital banking. He urged banks to comply with the relevant rules and regulations of the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) regarding online funds transfer facility, customer consent and authentication of transactions. The President also asked the Banking Mohtasib Pakistan (BMP) to approach SBP

and other banks that on the rejection of a complaint of a bank customer about a disputed transaction, the customer should be informed in a simple letter that they could approach the institution of BMP for relief. The President gave these remarks while deciding upon a representation filed by UBL against the decision of BMP directing it to refund Rs 79,500 to Mr Abudl Rauf (the complainant), whose account was fraudulently debited through the Inter-Bank Funds Transfer (IBFT) facility. The complainant had received a call from a phone number similar to the bank's helpline, and the caller introduced himself as the bank's representative and asked for his banking details/credentials, which he provided. Later, his ac-

count was debited with a total amount of Rs 79,500 through IBFT even though he had never activated the Internet Banking Facility. He approached the bank to retrieve his lost amount but to no avail. Feeling aggrieved, he raised the matter with BMP, which passed the orders in his favour. The bank, then, filed a representation with the President against BMP's decision. Before deciding upon the representation, the President held a hearing of the case, at Aiwan-e-Sadr, in which the complainant and UBL's representative appeared. UBL's representative contended that 16 transactions of multiple small amounts were conducted from the complainant's bank account.

IRSA releases 330,600 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD: Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Friday released 330,600 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 399,500 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1542.29 feet and was 144.29 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 217,500 cusecs and 187,700 cusecs respectively. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1232.90 feet.—APP

Azadi day accessories gripping motorists' attention

ISLAMABAD: With the start of the independence month of August, many seasonal vendors were seen appearing on various roads of cities all around the country including a capital city where the sale of Independence day related accessories including national flags, bunting, badges, dresses, and other decorations has become an attraction for patriotic motorists. Makeshift shops on the footpaths are experiencing large crowds of children in the evening, mainly of the lower-and middle-income-group people, said a report aired by a private news channel. Roadside vendors claimed that the most enthusiasm can be seen in children who are busy collecting stickers, badges and also beautifying their bicycles and cars with special stickers inscribed with messages of Independence Day.—DNA

Ahsan inaugurates three Centres at QAU

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal on Friday inaugurated three centres including Pakistan China Joint Research Centre, Pakistan China Joint Research Centre on Earth Sciences, Dr A Q Khan Institute of Material and Emergency Sciences at the Quaid-e-Azam University (QAU) Islamabad.

Govt has put country back on right track

ISLAMABAD: Coordinator to the PM for Economy and Energy Bilal Azhar Kayani Friday said that the coalition government had put the country back on the right path in a short period of time and is vigorously working on infrastructure development mega projects. Talking to the PTV news channel, he said the present government has managed to inject 5,000 megawatts (MW) of additional electricity into the system, adding, we have

brought back electricity in the country, which faced scarcity from 2018 to 2022 due to negligence of the PTI government. Bilal Kiyani mentioned that the current government had also launched various development projects under the CPEC, especially in the power sector, at full speed. The PML-N was utilizing every penny of public money in an honest and transparent manner for the welfare of the masses, he said, adding, we have strong roots

in the masses and would emerge victorious in the upcoming election in the country. Replying to a query, he replied that the government, despite challenging economic times, has tried to provide maximum relief to the common people. While lashing out at the Khan-led government, he said PTI's government ruined Pakistan's economy, foreign policy, and the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) project to the worst political revenge.—APP

Pakistan's scenic beauty can be turned into great opportunity: PM



efforts to promote tourism, though the government was about to complete its term very soon. Prime Minister Shehbaz instructed the Advisor as well as the government officers not to interact with their counterparts but also those countries which had excelled in tourism, cultural heritage and other fields. "Our country is blessed by Allah Almighty with great natural resources of scenic beauty all over Northern Areas, which can be converted into a great opportunity," he remarked. Minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Sayyed Ezzatullah Zarghami and Ambassador of Iran Reza Amiri Moghaddam and diplomats from different countries also attended the ceremony. The portal contains information about the top 20 tourist destinations including K2, Gwadar, Ziarat Valley, Uch Sharif, Deosai National Park, Kalash Valley, Takht Bhai, Hingol National Park, Shandar Pass, Kambhar Lake, Fairy Meadows, Ratti Gali, Lahore Fort, Makli Graveyard, Randawar Fort, Rohtas Fort, Kumrat Valley, Hunza Valley and Mohenjo-Daro. It guides the tourists about the beaches and waterfalls, nature and landscape, festivals, spiritual tourism.—DNA

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday said that being rich with immense scenic beauty particularly the Northern Areas, Pakistan could turn these resources into a great opportunity. The prime minister, addressing the launching ceremony of the "Salam Pakistan" brand and e-portal that would help promote tourist attractions across the world and attract tourists. He said that Pakistan was a great place for promoting tourism and cultural heritage. He instructed his Advisor Aoun Chaudhry to do maximum



ظالم کا ہر ظلم جب معصوم پر ہر ستارے
کشمیر کا بچہ چالی ہاتھ پر طوفان سے لڑتا ہے

کشمیر اہل کشمیر کا

حکومت پنجاب

15 اگست 2019
تا
15 اگست 2023
نہتے کشمیریوں پر
ظلم و ستم کے
1460 دن

Briefs

Kashmiris on both sides of LoC will observe Youm-e-Istehsal today

ISLAMABAD: Kashmiris on both sides of the Line of Control (LoC), in Pakistan and all over the world will observe Youm-e-Istehsal, tomorrow, August 5, to register their protest against Narendra Modi-led Hindutva Indian government's illegal action taken on that day in 2019. According to Kashmir Media Service, The Bharatiya Janata Party Indian government and its Modi regime under the barrel of gun in gross violation of the United Nations resolutions and international law scrapped Articles 370 and 35A of the Indian Constitution that granted special status to Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir and imposed military siege in the territory on 5th August 2019.

Meanwhile, All Parties Hurriyat Conference has appealed to the Kashmiri people to observe Black Day on 5th August to convey a strong message to the world that Kashmiris do not accept India's illegal occupation over Jammu and Kashmir. Illegally detained APHC leadership, including Masarat Alam Butt, Shabbir Ahmad Shah, Muhammad Yasin Malik, Mirwaiz Umar Farooq, Nayeem Ahmad Khan, Aasiya Andrabi and Molvi Bashir Ahmad in their separate messages from an Indian jail, said August 5, 2019 is one of the blackest days in IOJK.

They said the purpose of observing the day as Youm-e-Istehsal-Kashmir is to sensitize the international community about New Delhi's brutal repression being carried out by its over one million occupation troops in the territory.—APP

Famous poet, literary figure Sufi Tabassum remembered

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Famous Urdu poet and literary figure, Sufi Ghulam Mustafa Tabassum best known for his creation of the beloved character 'Tot Batot' was remembered on Friday on the occasion of his birth anniversary. He was born on August 4, 1899, in Amritsar to parents of Kashmiri descent. He was an amazing talent who earned a Master's degree in Persian from Forman Christian College in Lahore and went on to spend his entire career at Government College Lahore, eventually rising to head the Department of Persian Studies. Sufi Tabassum was best known for his creation of the beloved character 'Tot Batot' and for his translations of numerous poetical works from Urdu and Persian into Punjabi. He was a prolific writer and speaker, and his works and speeches were widely recognized for their beauty and insight. He was also a sought after speaker on radio and television, where his engaging personality and deep understanding of the literary arts made him a popular figure. Throughout his career, Tabassum received numerous awards for his contributions to the literary world, including the Tamgha-e-Nishane-Sipas award from the Government of Iran in 1966 and the Sitara-iltiaz by the Government of Pakistan. He died on February 7, 1978 in Lahore.



ISLAMABAD: Members of Chinese delegation travelling by the coaches given by the Chinese government in connection with 10 years celebration of CPEC at Margalla Railway Station, in Federal Capital.—Online

US Embassy rewards innovation in Pakistan

These women stood out among over 70 talented graduates, securing seed funding of \$5500, \$4500, \$3500, and \$2500 for their startups

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: The U.S. Embassy in Islamabad wishes to congratulate the four winners of the third Academy of Women Entrepreneurs (AWE) seeding funding competition. These women stood out among over 70 talented graduates, securing seed funding of \$5500, \$4500, \$3500, and \$2500 for their startups.

The competition was fierce, with emerging female entrepreneurs presenting ambitious plans they

worked on during a 13-week course for start-ups. The winners impressed the judges with their knowledge of the market, ability to communicate their vision and the clear benefit to their communities that their businesses will provide. Meet the winners:

1. Maria Ishaq (Faisalabad): Maria's start-up aims to revolutionize the energy sector with an eco-friendly coal product that will benefit consumers and the environment. 2. Ania Sattar (Islamabad): With her organic

fertilizer business, Ania offers a greener, healthier choice for the environment and consumers alike. 3. Sabahat Musa (Quetta): From baking cakes to empowering women, Sabahat's dessert shop start-up has a long-term vision to turn her business into a training ground and job creator for other women in her community. 4. Saima Iqbal (Quetta): Through her beautiful textiles and knitted clothing, Saima provides more than fashion; she

offers income and dignity to dis-

abled craftspersons in Quetta. These phenomenal women weren't the only ones to be acknowledged. Honorable mentions were awarded to three additional inspiring entrepreneurs who are providing income and employment in refugee, transgender, and remote communities. Building Bridges, Fostering Success With personalized mentorship from seasoned Pakistani entrepreneurs, the 90 participants in the AWE program embarked on an intensive three-

month journey. Their rigorous education in entrepreneurship paves the way for increased success, expansion opportunities, and connections to potential funding. Held at seven of the U.S. Mission's Lincoln Corners in Islamabad, Gilgit, Sargodha, Faisalabad, Karachi, Hyderabad, and Quetta, AWE Pakistan is more than a course - it's a network and a movement. Graduates join a global community that continues to offer growth and connections.

'Youm-e-Shuhada-e-Police' observed

RAWALPINDI: 'Youm-e-Shuhada-e-Police' was observed here on Friday at Police lines to pay tributes to all those Police officers and jawans who sacrificed their lives for the protection of the motherland.

Regional Police Officer (RPO) Syed Khurram Ali, City Police Officer (CPO) Syed Khalid Hamdani, Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Operations Faisal Saleem, SP Headquarters, Divisional SPs, SDPOs, senior police officers, martyrs' families, representatives of trade unions, police officers, constables and civil society members attended the event organized to pay tributes to the martyrs of the Police Department.

Rawalpindi District Police on the special directive of Inspector General Punjab Police organized a function to pay tributes to the martyrs. Senior Police Officers and a Police contingent presented a salute to the martyrs who sacrificed their lives for maintaining peace in society. RPO, CPO, and SSP Operations laid floral wreaths on the martyrs' monument and prayed for the departed souls, peace and security of the country and nation.

The RPO said that the Police were proud of its 'Shuhada'. "We will never forget their ultimate sacrifices in the line of duty and will look after the bereaved families in every manner," he added. He said that nearly 1600 personnel of the Punjab police rendered the ultimate sacrifices in the line of duty. The nation could not forget the supreme sacrifices rendered by the martyrs, he said, adding "We are standing with the families of the martyrs".

The CPO said that 115 officers and jawans of Rawalpindi police sacrificed their lives for the nation. The spokesman informed that the lighting of lamps and candles ceremony was also held on Thursday night at the martyrs' monument in connection with the Police martyrs day.—DNA

Streamlining visa issuances

Hina enhances efficiency, accountability for Afghan nationals' applications

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Hina Rabbani Khar on Friday shed light on the intricacies surrounding visa issuances for Afghan nationals in the Senate. Recognizing the complexity of the matter during the question hour, she emphasized that national foreign missions receive a staggering number of routine visa ap-

plications, making the process multifaceted. In her statement, Hina outlined the commitment of the national diplomatic mission to extend leniency in granting visas on grounds of health or humanitarian reasons. However, she underscored that this benevolent intention sometimes led to misuse by Afghan nationals, causing challenges within the system. An important revelation was made by Hina as she highlighted the

comprehensive overhaul of the visa issuance process. Presently, the authority to grant visas, especially in cases requiring relaxation, rested solely with the head of the mission, she said adding that this shift in power had been enacted in the last two months, with the delegation of such authority withdrawn from other embassy staff. Modernizing the approach to visa facilitation, Hina detailed the introduction of an online visa appli-

cation system. Additionally, specific staff members had been entrusted with the responsibility of evaluating all necessary formalities before granting visas, she added. Addressing concerns raised by senators, the minister of state for foreign affairs responded to questions regarding a specific incident. She revealed that an individual named Sair Khan, while serving as a Cypther Assistant at the Pakistani embassy in Stockholm.

PALSP raises alarm over soaring electricity and petrol prices

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Association of Large Steel Producers (PALSP) has sounded the alarm as electricity and petrol prices continue to surge relentlessly, pushing the steel industry to its breaking point. PALSP strongly protests against the massive increase in costs, posing a severe threat to the industry's survival and putting millions of jobs at stake. Wajid Bukhari, the Secretary General of PALSP, stat-

ed that the colossal surge in the cost of key inputs is a betrayal to the industry. The recent price hikes in electricity and petrol will not only escalate production costs but also push the industry to the brink of closure, jeopardizing millions of jobs. "The sharp increase in electricity tariff and petrol prices will deliver another heavy blow to an industry already reeling from inflation, soaring financial charges, and relentless fuel price hikes," said Bukhari. "The massive currency depreci-

ation has exacerbated the financial crunch, and the recent electricity price surge is a further blow that we cannot sustain." Over the past year, electricity prices have surged by over 78%, from PKR 28/unit (with taxes) in June 2022 to approximately PKR 50/unit (with taxes) in July 2023. The hike of PKR 7.5/unit, constituting a 34% increase in the basic tariff, coupled with frequent upward adjustments in electricity rates, will cripple the steel industry, which heavily relies on power.

China provides Pakistan new markets

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has an enduring practice of producing high-quality sports goods, including footballs, basketballs, volleyballs cricket equipment, and other sports accessories. Experts believe that the country's skilled artisans are renowned for their expertise in this field. Despite its superb craftsmanship and a large pool of workers, the industry's poor access to international markets has hampered its growth for a long time. Ghulam Qadir, Commercial Counselor of the Pakistani Embassy in China, remarked that China provides Pakistan with an excellent opportunity to expand its influence and open up new markets,

according to China Economic Net (CEN). As the world's largest manufacturing country, China has advanced manufacturing technology, a huge economic volume and a complete trade network, all of which can help Pakistan's sporting goods industry to undergo significant changes. "Pakistan's basketballs, footballs, and volleyballs (community code: 95066210) exported to China in the first six months of this year crossed \$5.53 million, whereas the same period last year it was only \$4.22 million. Similarly, equipment for sports outdoor games, swim/paddling pools (community code: 95069990) crossed \$0.3 million, which is expected to improve this year", he added. The Commercial

Counselor further said that China's advanced manufacturing technology has revolutionized Pakistan's sports goods industry. Through collaboration, Pakistani manufacturers have gained access to state-of-the-art machinery, production techniques, and quality control processes, adding that this has not only enhanced the overall quality of the products but also increased production efficiency, allowing the industry to meet the growing demands of international markets. Sony Iqbal, Chairman of the Small & Medium Enterprise (SMEs) Association in Pakistan told China Economic Net that one of the key advantages of partnering with China is the cost-effectiveness.



ISLAMABAD: IG Motorway Sultan Ali Khawaja awarding certificates to families of Shuhadas.—DNA

DINO VALLEY

10 minutes Drive from The Monal Islamabad

DINO PARK | 35+ RIDES | CARNIVAL RESTAURANT
CAFES | FOOD CARTS

www.dinovalley.pk | 03005221018 / 03455357094 | 03001769377 | @dinovalleypk

Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

Editor-in-Chief: Ansar Mahmood Bhatti
Deputy Editor: Abid Raza

Member APNS / ABC Certified

Vol: 03 Issue: 307

Email: dailyisbpost@gmail.com

Phone: 051-2266165 / 051-2261960

Off: Awan Plaza, Block 18-A, G-8 Markaz Islamabad

Rating downgrade reflects bad governance

FITCH Ratings lowered the United States' long-term credit rating to AA+ from its top mark of AAA on Tuesday. The agency, one of the three major credit rating companies, along with Moody's and S&P Global Ratings, said the country's high and growing debt burden and the "steady deterioration in the standards of governance" had undermined confidence in its fiscal management. As predicted, US Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen disagreed with Fitch's move, calling it "arbitrary and based on outdated data" in a statement. The White House, too, said it "strongly disagrees with this decision". White House Press Secretary Karine Jean-Pierre said: "It defies reality to downgrade the US at a moment when President Biden has delivered the strongest recovery of any major economy in the world." But their protestations have only served to show Fitch has hit the nail on the head. The downgrade is the second in US history. Standard & Poor's stripped the country of its triple-A rating in 2011, also amid a debt-limit standoff. Fitch had indicated the possibility of a downgrade in May, then maintained that position in June even after the debt ceiling crisis of the US government was temporarily resolved. Although US lawmakers finally agreed on further raising the country's debt ceiling so that it can pay its bills by borrowing more from the future, the structural problem concerning the fundamental fitness of the US governance system has not been touched upon. The partisan struggle in Washington has hijacked the nation's political system. The legislature, media outlets and other power watchdog departments in the country, which are supposedly designed to be a solid foundation for the smooth running of the US political system, are also split along party lines, which is reflective of the deeply polarized country. Ever since former US president Donald Trump took office, the two parties have reached a tacit consensus that there is no need to continue to retain the last shreds of political decency in their power struggle. As a result, the world has seen one political farce after another staged by the two camps of narrow-minded and shortsighted politicians, who prioritize their grip on power. Take the debt ceiling as an example. Despite the makeshift agreement, the federal government now faces the prospect of a shutdown this fall, as lawmakers will continue to spar over how, where and what level of federal funds should be spent. The nonstop dueling risks tumbling the US economy into a "recession" in the final three months of this year. And, as Fitch has warned, that will generate spillover effects for an already troubled world.



UK aid spending: slashed budgets

THE most damning report on this Conservative government's aid strategy comes not from any development charity but from the Tory minister responsible for international development. Andrew Mitchell has this week released a Foreign Office analysis that describes the "severe" consequences of the government's reduced aid spending. In Yemen, half a million women and children will not receive healthcare and "fewer preventable deaths will be avoided". In Somalia, a programme to counter female genital mutilation may be deferred or dropped altogether. Across Africa, there will be far more unsafe abortions and women dying in childbirth. This widespread devastation is civil servants' assessment of the impact from just one year of cuts to aid spending, yet the UK is into its fourth straight year of reduced development, during a period that has encompassed a global pandemic, a dire shortage of Covid vaccines, a worldwide inflation shock and a violent invasion of Ukraine that has disrupted international supplies of grain and oil. Mr Mitchell hails from a different time in Tory politics, when, under David Cameron, the party embraced increased aid spending and environmentalism as part of a bid to detoxify its image. How deep those commitments ever ran is a good question, given how resoundingly they have been dumped. Yet their short-lived history in modern Conservatism is a good indicator of where the party now sees its priorities and electoral appeal. As chancellor, it was Rishi Sunak who dropped the government's commitment to spend 0.7% of national income on foreign development. While claiming this was a stopgap measure to help the Covid-hit public finances, as prime minister Mr Sunak shows no urgency about restoring that pledge. Just two years ago, the then foreign secretary, Liz Truss, announced that she would increase spending on aid for women and children. That promise, too, now hangs in tatters. These diminished budgets to help the very poorest in the world are not just because the government wants to plead penury. Mr Sunak's government is actively diverting the cash to help refugees from Ukraine and towards the handling of asylum seekers. Since the Illegal Migration Act of last month bans anyone arriving without permission from applying for asylum, that may break international rules on aid. It is certainly unethical to pass off prison-like barges parked off Portland as being in any way about international development. Yet in 2022, the UK spent almost a third of its foreign aid budget at home. As the recently appointed development minister, Mr Mitchell may have put out this latest document in a bid for transparency. But the former chief whip doubtless understands that such a release, well briefed to the press, could be helpful in future bunfights over cash. Yet he is fighting a rearguard action. Labour cannot avoid its share of the blame for this mess. Creating the Department for International Development was a proud moment for New Labour, yet Sir Keir Starmer will promise neither to reinstate it nor to adopt the 0.7% target. The Tory government is able to get away with such callous policies because so much of Westminster politics appears to be a race to the bottom, in which lifting up destitute families in Africa or in the UK is a luxury rather than part of our common humanity. Yet the human costs are all too real, as the Foreign Office's report proves yet again.

Will India's future generations forgive its decay into anti-Muslim hatred?

Sameena Dalwai

Heinrich Heine 1820: In India that order has been reversed. We burned people and have now reached books. The Mumbai riots after the demolition of Babri Masjid in 1992. The 2002 Gujarat carnage. A mother's testimony in Gujarat narrated how they tied her disabled son to a tree and beat him up. He cried for water but they fed him petrol. A match was put on him and he blew up like a bomb. It's a vision the mother is fated to carry. but I wonder if his killers remember it. Are they tormented by it? In the Holocaust, trains carrying Jewish people stopped at several stations where men, women and children trapped in cattle cages cried for water. Families were taken away from homes, old people shot in the streets

A PART of the Indian state where I live is on fire. Barely 77km (48 miles) from the university where I teach in Haryana state, a mob set a mosque on fire on early Tuesday and shot dead a young imam in a neighbouring district. It's the latest bloodstain on India's social fabric, which is already in tatters. If history's any guide, these stains will haunt India — and Indians — for decades to come. Ninety years ago, on May 10, 1933, 5000 students of the Nazi students union and their professors gathered in Bebelplatz, Berlin, with flaming torches. They set fire to a pile of nearly 20,000 books written mainly by Jewish authors and communist thinkers like Karl Marx and Rosa Luxemburg — both of whom also had Jewish roots. Forty thousand people watched this event. The students read out their mantra: "Against decadence and moral decay! For discipline and decency in the family and the nation! I commit to the flames, the writings of....." Writer Eric Kastner, whose books were hurled into the fire, was standing in the crowd, unrecognised. He later described this as Begräbniswetter or funeral weather. The day was dark and cloudy, and the rain extinguished the fire. So the students had to keep pouring petrol for the flames to live and the books to die. I was reminded of this in April, when a mob burned down a madrasa library with 4,500 books — including ancient manuscripts and handwritten Islamic texts in calligraphy — in the town of Bihar Sharif in the state of Bihar. The library was 113 years old and preserved a priceless collection of books over several generations. The attackers came prepared with sticks, stones and petrol bombs. If Kastner and hundreds of writers and artists left Germany and lived in exile while their homeland was violently reshaped by the Nazis, right-wing politicians are today openly naming historians and journalists and telling them to leave India. In Germany on May 10, 2023, nine outstanding artists read texts from writers like Rezso-

Kastner and Kurt Tucholsky whose books were burned that day 90 years ago. Directly under Bebelplatz is now a library memorial with empty white shelves with space for around 20,000 books. There is also a bronze plate with the inscription: That was but a prelude; where they burn books, They will ultimately burn people as well. Heinrich Heine 1820: In India that order has been reversed. We burned people and have now reached books. The Mumbai riots after the demolition of Babri Masjid in 1992. The 2002 Gujarat carnage. A mother's testimony in Gujarat narrated how they tied her disabled son to a tree and beat him up. He cried for water but they fed him petrol. A match was put on him and he blew up like a bomb. It's a vision the mother is fated to carry. but I wonder if his killers remember it. Are they tormented by it? In the Holocaust, trains carrying Jewish people stopped at several stations where men, women and children trapped in cattle cages cried for water. Families were taken away from homes, old people shot in the streets. Germans saw all this. What did they feel? Today that collective memory has made Germany a rare nation that confronts at least some of its horrid past in its lived present. The country's painful modern history is commemorated everywhere — a police station where the Stasi tortured suspects, a hospital where cruel experiments were conducted upon Roma children, Jewish homes from where families were deported to the gas chambers. India has never had any such reckoning — not even over the subcontinent's partition, during which more than one million people were murdered, and 15 million migrated between India and the new state of Pakistan. We have no plaques, painted walls and hardly any memorials, only memory. Visions carved into the minds of people and passed on from generation to generation. In Germany, it started with attacks on Jewish

trades and bans on their professional work, grew into the capture of Jewish property and homes, but very soon turned to deportation to ghettos, followed by mass murders. All this while non-Jewish Germans watched. Could they have stopped it? In India, we are watching the rapid poisoning of the collective mind with propaganda that the ancient glory of Hindus was tarnished by Muslim rulers. That contemporary India's rise is being held back by Muslims — who are blamed for everything from the country's large population and the spread of the coronavirus to anti-women practices and even inflation. From the withdrawal of scholarships for Muslims to amendments to the citizenship law that discriminate against Muslim asylum seekers, the ruling party is leaving no stone unturned to fan the fuels of division. Periodic violence and lynchings, as in Haryana this week, help push Muslims further and further into ghettos. Muslim women's organisations working towards domestic equality, Muslim youth trying to adopt a liberal way of life away from the community gaze, and children trying to get education and economic mobility are all pushed back into the ghetto. They are then compelled to live a Muslimness that is defined by others — the Hindu right and self-proclaimed Muslim leaders determine how a Muslim should look, behave and dress. Fanatics from both sides debate over it, clash swords over it. The voices of the common Muslim — youth, children, women, men and professionals — are lost. As a result, an unchanging target is preserved for the merchants of hate. Many decades after the Holocaust, Germany still carries the burden of its history. We Indians are living that history right here, right now. Is it too late to amend it? Or are our future generations condemned to carry the weight of what we did — and didn't do? — Courtesy: Al Jazeera

Russia must stop using food as a weapon

Josep Borrell

Russia's decision was taken despite the UN secretary-general's renewed proposals to work to address its concerns. In order to shift blame, Russia claims that its own agricultural exports were not sufficiently facilitated. This is not borne out by publicly available trade data, which shows that Russia's agricultural exports are thriving. Moscow also gained important benefits from its memorandum of understanding with the UN on fertilizer exports, which had been brokered in parallel to the grain deal

ON July 17, nearly one year after it was signed in Istanbul, Russia decided to not renew the Black Sea Grain Initiative that allowed Ukraine to export agricultural goods to global markets. As underlined by the secretary-general of the UN, this initiative had been "a beacon of hope in a world that desperately needs it." Before Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine — a critical global food supplier — a fifth of the world's barley came from Ukraine, as well as a sixth of its maize and an eighth of its wheat. After Russia invaded Ukraine, attacking grain fields and silos and blocking Ukrainian ports, global food prices spiked to record levels and endangered much-needed food supply for many importer countries. The grain initiative aimed to reestablish a vital route for agricultural exports from Ukraine and to lower global food prices. Despite many challenges, it achieved its key purpose. The export of almost 33 million tons of grains and food from Ukraine to 45 different countries played an instrumental role in reducing global food prices by some 25 percent from the record high reached shortly after Russia's attack. As public trade data shows, more than half of the grain, including two-thirds of the wheat, went to developing countries. In addition, the initiative ensured continued access to grain for the World Food Program. In 2023, Ukraine supplied 80 percent of the wheat procured to support humanitarian operations in the most food-insecure countries, such as Afghanistan, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Sudan and Yemen. Without the Black Sea route, the World Food Program will have to get its grain elsewhere, at higher prices and with a longer lead time, at a time when the world is facing an unprecedented food crisis.

Russia's decision was taken despite the UN secretary-general's renewed proposals to work to address its concerns. In order to shift blame, Russia claims that its own agricultural exports were not sufficiently facilitated. This is not borne out by publicly available trade data, which shows that Russia's agricultural exports are thriving. Moscow also gained important benefits from its memorandum of understanding with the UN on fertilizer exports, which had been brokered in parallel to the grain deal. The UN has worked relentlessly to clarify regulatory frameworks and engage with the private sector to find dedicated solutions across the banking and insurance sectors. These efforts have been conducted in close collaboration with the EU and its partners. Contrary to the lies spread by Russia, the EU has indeed ensured that our sanctions have no impact on global food security. There are no sanctions on Russian exports of food and fertilizer to third countries and the EU has provided extensive guidance to economic operators, clarifying that these transfers to third countries are permitted. We have also worked with the UN to allow related payments. Despite these well-known and verifiable facts, Russia decided to pull out of the grain initiative, using food as a weapon and endangering the global food supply. Hours after withdrawing, Russia also started to destroy Ukraine's grain storage facilities and port infrastructure with daily targeted attacks, not only in the Black Sea itself but also on the Danube. As an immediate reaction, wholesale wheat and maize prices saw their biggest price increase since the start of Russia's war of aggression. The increased food price volatility is likely to persist as long as Russia puts global food supply under deliberate stress, aggravating the worldwide cost-of-

living crisis — and most acutely for food-insecure people in import-dependent countries. This is unacceptable and should be resolutely condemned. As the world deals with disrupted supplies and higher prices, Russia is now approaching vulnerable countries, notably in Africa, with bilateral offers of limited grain shipments, pretending to solve a problem it created itself. This is a cynical policy of deliberately using food as a weapon. In response to Russia's irresponsible actions, the EU is active along three main lines. First, we will continue to support the tireless efforts of the UN and Türkiye to resume the Black Sea Grain Initiative. Second, we continue to strengthen our "Solidarity Lanes" as alternative routes for Ukrainian agricultural exports to reach global markets through the EU. These lanes have allowed the export of more than 41 million tons of Ukraine's agricultural goods so far, and we are increasing this as much as possible to mitigate the consequences of Russia's termination of the grain deal. Third, we have increased our financial support to countries and people most in need, providing €18 billion (\$19.75 billion) to address food security until 2024. We call on the international community and all countries to step up their own assistance in support of global food security. We ask all our partners to urge Russia to return to negotiations, as the African Union already has, as well as to refrain from targeting Ukraine's agricultural infrastructure. With a clear and unified voice, we can get Russia to resume its participation in the Black Sea Grain Initiative. The world has a shared interest in the responsible stewardship of global food security. We owe it to the people most in need. — Courtesy: Arab News

Briefs

IHC voids lower court's July 8 verdict

FROM PAGE 01
while his petition to declare the case inadmissible was rejected by the court. On July 4, the IHC overturned the same ruling and directed the sessions court to hear the petitioner and decide the matter within seven days. On July 8, ADSJ Humayun Dilwar declared the Toshakhana case against Khan as maintainable, which was again challenged in the IHC. Meanwhile, the trial continued at the court and was about to conclude soon. During the proceedings, Khan's lawyers also accused the presiding judge of bias on the basis of his Facebook posts and sought the transfer of the case. On August 2, the trial court also rejected the PTI chairman's witnesses, stating that he failed to prove their "relevance" in the criminal proceedings against him. It was also challenged in the high court. Citing the repeated adjournments sought by Khan during the duration of the trial, the bench ruled that there was while the case should be reheard, there was no need for the case to be transferred to a different court. "The order [...] shows that a number of opportunities were provided to the petitioner to address arguments but adjournments were sought, hence the matter was decided in the absence of learned counsel for the petitioner."

"...so the learned counsel for the petitioner is correct in saying that he has been condemned unheard and it would be only appropriate to remand the matter back to the Trial Court for decision afresh," the order mentioned. The order mentioned that it is not essential that the matter be sent to a different judge, emphasising that remitting the matter to a different jurist can be regarded as a matter of propriety and not a principle of law. "However, in the instant case even remanding the matter to a different court is not mandated." The Supreme Court had earlier in the day dismissed the ex-prime minister's petition against trial proceedings pertaining to the Toshakhana case following his withdrawal of the said plea. The three-member bench hearing the case, led by Justice Yahya Afridi and comprising Justice Hasan Azhar Rizvi and Justice Musarat Hilali, heard Khan's petition against the Toshakhana case.

Trial court summons Imran today
FROM PAGE 01
relating to the maintainability matter, the high court again sent the case to the sessions court," replied the lawyer. He pleaded with the court to grant an exemption to his client from personnel appearance. Meanwhile, Election Commission of Pakistan's (ECP) lawyer Amjad Parvez said that the trial court had issued notices to the relevant parties in the reference filed by the election watchdog for the trial of the deposed prime minister — who was removed from the office via a no-confidence motion in April last year — next week, adding that the IHC did not issue stay order over the matter.

'NA to be dissolved on August 9'
FROM PAGE 01
consultation would end within two to three days. The current assembly's tenure will end on August 12 and if it completes its stipulated time then elections will be held within 60 days. However, the Constitution states that the polls must be held within 90 days if the assembly is dissolved before the completion of its tenure. If the summary is moved to dissolve the lower house of parliament on August 9 that it would be liable to the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) to hold polls within 90 days. However, before the assembly dissolution the government and the opposition need to agree on a name for a caretaker prime minister.

Asian Champions Trophy

Pakistan-Korea match ends in a 1-1 draw

The 2023 edition of Asian Hockey Champions Trophy will be played between Aug 3 to 12

DNA

CHENNAI: Pakistan remained winless in the ongoing Asian Hockey Champions Trophy in Chennai, India, after playing out a 1-1 draw against defending champions Korea on Friday. Hanan Shahid scored for Pakistan in the 18th minute with a field goal, while Jihun Yang equalised in the 53rd through a penalty stroke. Earlier, Pakistan lost to Malaysia 3-1 in their first match on Thursday. Pakistan and India have won the Asian Champions Trophy thrice each, which makes them the most successful teams in the event. Korea won the title in 2021 after beating Japan on penalties in the final in Dhaka, Bangladesh. The 2023 edition of the Asian Hockey Champions Trophy will be played between August 3 to 12. All six teams will each play five matches in the round-robin stage



with the top four set to qualify for the semi-finals. The last four matches will be held on August 11, with the final on the next day.

Pakistan squad
Muhammad Umar Bhatta (c), Akmal Hussain, Abdullah Ishtiaq Khan, Muhammad Abdullah, Muhammad Sufyan Khan, Ehtsham Aslam, Osama Bashir, Aqeel Ahmed, Arshad Liaquat, Muhammad Imad, Abdul Hanan Shahid, Zakaria Hayat, Rana Abdul Waheed Ashraf (Vice Captain), Roman, Muhammad Murtaza Yaqoob, Muhammad Shahzaib Khan, Afraz, Abdul Rahman, while the standby includes Ali Raza, Muhammad Baqir, Muhammad Nadeem Khan, Abdul Wahab, Waqar Ali, Muhammad Arsalan and Abdul Qayyum.

Pakistan's remaining matches schedule
August 6 - vs Japan
August 7 - vs China
August 9 - vs India

PBBF shown serious concerns over dissemination of false information

OUR CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Basketball Federation (PBBF) has raised serious concerns over the dissemination of false information regarding the organization and the Referees Coaching and Refreshers clinic 2023 at Lahore. The federation, along with the International Basketball Federation (FIBA), vehemently denies any association with the said activity. In a recent statement, the PBBF addressed the misleading claims that have been circulating among the public and the basketball community. The federation firmly asserted that it is not connected to the purported Referees Coaching and Refreshers clinic scheduled for this year in Lahore. The PBBF and FIBA jointly urge individuals to exercise caution and avoid being misled by such misinformation.

Brigadier (Retd) Muhammad Ittikhar Mansoor, the President of the Pakistan Basketball Federation, along with Mr. Khalid Bashir, the Secretary General, has assured the basketball fraternity that the elected body of PBBF is fully operational and actively functioning. Under their leadership, the federation has successfully organized a series of national events, reinforcing Pakistan's presence in the basketball arena. One of the notable achievements for Pakistan's basketball was the participation of the national team in the Five Nation Basketball Championship held in Maldives. The team displayed an impressive performance, making the country proud on an international platform. The Pakistan Basketball Federation takes great pride in its affiliations with prominent sports governing bodies, including Pakistan Sports Board (PSB), Pakistan Olympic

Association (POA), FIBA (Asia), and the Basketball World Body (FIBA). These affiliations reaffirm the federation's commitment to upholding international standards and promoting the growth of basketball in the country. The elected body, under the dynamic leadership of Brigadier (Retd) Muhammad Ittikhar Mansoor, has already orchestrated national fixtures for both men and women, which saw enthusiastic participation from affiliated units competing for top honors. As part of its ongoing commitment to fostering basketball development in Pakistan, the PBBF is in deliberation with the Pakistan Sports Board to organize several significant events before the conclusion of 2023. The proposed events including Inter Division National Basketball Championship for Men, FIBA International Referee Workshop, Senior National Basketball

Championship for Men, Olympic Solidarity Level 1 Coaching Course, National Training Camp for Participation in upcoming South Asian Games and 6th Asian Indoor Games (2024). In light of recent misleading activities, the Pakistan Basketball Federation urges all stakeholders and basketball enthusiasts to verify information from credible sources and refrain from engaging in or promoting false claims. The federation encourages the basketball community to stay united, focus on the growth of the sport, and support legitimate initiatives aimed at elevating basketball standards in Pakistan. The Pakistan Basketball Federation is the governing body for basketball in Pakistan. It is responsible for organizing national and international basketball events, promoting the sport at all levels, and developing talented players and referees within the country.

Pakistan qualify for semi-finals of Norway Cup

OSLO: Pakistan street child team qualified for the semi-finals of the ongoing Norway Cup by beating Sandviken 2-0 on Friday in Oslo. Both goals were scored by Faisal for the winning side. The Green Shirts have registered six wins in a row during the tournament so far. Pakistan will play the semi-final, later today, against the winner of the clash between Bremnes and Charlottenlund Sportsklubb. Pakistan beat Trsyil FK 4-0 in the pre-quarter-final yesterday to secure their place in the next round. The Ambassador of Pakistan to Norway, Saadia Altaf Qazi, also met the Pakistan team on Tuesday. She lauded the team's performance in the tournament, so far, on this occasion. Pakistan is participating in the Norway Cup under the banner of Muslim Hands, a charity organization, and thus is playing under the name of Muslim Hands FC. A total of 2,350 teams and about 30,000 players are participating in the tournament across different competitions. It must be noted here that Pakistan team finished runners-up in the Street Child World Cup in Doha last year. They remained unbeaten throughout the tournament but lost the final against Egypt on penalties (4-3). They were also the runners-up in the previous edition in Russia (2018), meanwhile in Brazil (2014) they finished third.

Pakistan's squad
Tufail Shiwari (c), Saud Ahmed, Asad Nasir, Abid Ali, Faisal Ahmad, Mohammad Ali, Ahmad Raza, Abdul Wahab, Shahmir, Sahil Gull, Mohammad Aqeel, Abdullah, Ubaid Ullah, Ali Asif. — Agencies

Shawaiz's half-century leads Pak Shaheens into final

The right-handed batter was equally supported by the team's captain Rohail Nazir in the end as he smashed quick 33 runs to register another victory in the series. Set to chase 121 runs, Shaheens lost Shamyul Hussain who managed to score just a run. Shawaiz stayed there for longer and scored his second fifty of this series

MELBOURNE: Shawaiz Irfan was on top with yet another fifty as Pakistan Shaheens chased down 121 runs in 12.5 overs with eight wickets in hands against PNG to qualify for the final of the Top End T20 series today in Australia. The right-handed batter was equally supported by the team's captain Rohail Nazir in the end as he smashed quick 33 runs to register another victory in the series. Set to chase 121 runs, Shaheens lost Shamyul Hussain who managed to score just a run. Shawaiz stayed there for longer and scored his second fifty of this series. He alongside Azan Awais scored 54 runs together. Rohail then joined the crease after Shawaiz fell to Sese Bau in the eighth over. Rohail smashed the bowlers all around the park to score quick 33 winning runs. Azan remained not out on 26. Earlier, Ali Asfand bagged four important wickets to help Shaheens restrict PNG to 120-8 in 20 overs. After deciding to bat first, PNG's top-order batting collapsed following their openers' early departure. Hiri Hiri lost his wicket when PNG scored 27 runs. Asadollah Vala (18) resisted a bit in the middle but no other batter supported him. Sese Bau (32) and Noman Vanua (25) scored worthy 56 runs for their team. Their contribution carried their team forward while setting a target. Ali picked up four wickets and conceded only 11 runs in his four overs. Aaliyan Mahmood and Arafat Minhas took two wickets each. Shaheens will face Northern Territory Strike in final on August 6. — Agencies

Ousmane Dembele set to complete PSG move

BARCELONA: FC Barcelona winger Ousmane Dembele is set to complete his move to the French club Paris Saint Germain (PSG) on Friday. He is in Paris since Thursday and he will undergo a medical today at the club to finalise his move to the French champions. Dembele decided to leave FC Barcelona due to personal reasons. Barcelona head coach Xavi Hernandez confirmed to the media after their last pre-season game against AC Milan which they won 1-0 that

Dembele wants to leave. "I'll be clear: Dembele has asked to leave, he has said that he has an offer from PSG and that they have spoken to him. He was very clear about it," said Xavi. "It is a personal decision. We can't do anything about it. I feel really bad about it because we have looked after him a lot to ensure he was happy and could continue to make a difference, but now he has this offer and he has said he wants to go," Xavi added. Xavi wanted Dembele to renew and continue with

the club as he was one of the most important players for this. On the other hand, PSG are also about to finalise Goncalo Ramos' move to the French capital. Ramos emerged as a prospect after he scored a hat-trick against Switzerland in the FIFA World Cup 2022 Round of 16 game. He was then linked to many clubs including Manchester United but they were just rumors. However, with two attacking signings, it seems that PSG have prepared for a big departure, Kylian Mbappe, who confirmed in

June that he will not renew his contract till 2025. After which PSG decided to sell him this summer in order to avoid losing the footballer for free next summer. To push him out of the club, the French club went to extremes. The footballer was excluded from the club's squad for their Asian pre-season tour. PSG did not only exclude Mbappe from the pre-season squad, but they also decided to send him to train with discarded players, players who are no longer part of the project. — Agencies

Chairman NDMA along with delegation paid visit to US

ISLAMABAD: Chairman National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), Lieutenant General Inam Haider Malik along with a ten-member delegation visited the United States of America (USA) from 23 to 29 July on special invitation from Headquarters US Army Central (ARCENT). This visit was the follow-up to the visit of Commanding General ARCENT, Lieutenant General Patrick D. Frank to the NDMA in June this year and a continuation of bilateral engagements between US ARCENT and NDMA, said a news release issued here Friday. The Chairman NDMA and the delegation were received by Deputy Commanding General ARCENT, Major General Henry S. Dixon and his staff

at Shaw Air Force Base in Columbia, South Carolina. The objective of the visit was to enhance mutual cooperation among both countries and armies in the field of disaster management. The delegation visited US Central Command (CENTCOM), where they were welcomed by Lieutenant General Patrick D. Frank through video link. The delegation also visited State Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) in South Carolina, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Regional Headquarters in Georgia Atlanta, USAID and FEMA Headquarters in Washington. The delegation was also briefed by US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Transatlantic Division and Deputy Executive Director of Pacific Disaster Center, University of Hawaii. Pakistan's Ambassador to the USA, Masood Khan hosted a luncheon in honour of the delegation. The visit gave an insight into the procedures and latest technologies being employed by US counterparts for threat identification, risk analysis, risk mitigation and response generation, which will prove beneficial for enhancement in the sphere of disaster Management in Pakistan. — APP

Hales announces retirement from int'l cricket

"Throughout my time in an England shirt I've experienced some of highest highs as well as some of the lowest lows," Hales said in an Instagram post

LONDON: England's opener Alex Hales announced on Friday that he is retiring from international cricket with immediate effect. Hales, 34, retired as a T20 World Cup winner, having played his last match against Pakistan in the final at the Melbourne Cricket Ground in November. In his retirement post, he also confirmed that he will continue playing franchise cricket. "Throughout my time in an England shirt I've experienced some of the highest highs as well as some of the lowest lows," Hales said in an Instagram post. "It's been an incredible journey and I feel very content that my last game for England was winning a World Cup final. "Throughout the ups and down I've always felt a huge amount of support from my friends, family and undoubtedly the best



fans in world cricket. "I look forward to continuing to play for Notts and exploring more franchise cricket around the world." Even though he represented England in all three formats, he mainly played in the T20Is and ODIs. He batted in 75 T20Is and scored a total of 2074 runs at a strike rate of 138.35. In ODIs, he accumulated 2419 runs in 67 innings including six tons. Hales also played 11 Tests between 2015 and 2016 where he made five half-centuries and averaged 27.28. He made his T20I debut against India in Manchester in 2011 while his ODI debut was against the same opponent as well but that was in Cardiff, in August 2014. Hales played his last ODI against West Indies in 2019 and has not been a part of the ODI team since then. — Agencies

Pak Army will continue to support...

FROM PAGE 01

full support in academic pursuit and sports," he added. Our youth, Gen Munir further said, is the future of this country and with focus, dedication and "hard work there is nothing that Pakistan cannot accomplish". A day earlier, Prime Minister Shabbaz Sharif awarded Rs10 million to Hamza Khan. The premier also praised the world champion's efforts and hard work he put in to bring the laurels to the country. "Hamza won the junior title following a 37-year gap. The nation is proud of him. We hope and pray for his future success," he added. The PM added that squash required stamina and endurance. "I also played the game in my youth. It is one of the toughest games and requires extraordinary skills." He also hoped to see Hamza winning the senior title and becoming the world No 1 in days to come. Hamza thanked the prime minister for his support and encouragement. "I will make all possible efforts to earn a name for the country at the senior circuit."

Kashmiris to observe Youm-e-Istehsal

FROM PAGE 01

with the provincial governments to pay homage to the Kashmiris and condemn the Indian illegal occupation on Jammu and Kashmir. One Minute silence will be observed at 9:00 am in support of Kashmiris who were martyred in the freedom struggle. In Federal Capital Islamabad, a walk will be held at Constitution Avenue, which will start from Foreign Office and culminate at D-Chowk, where Advisor on Kashmir Affairs Qamar Zaman Kaira and leadership of All Parties Hurriyat Conference Azad Kashmir chapter will address the participants. It is pertinent to mention that the Modi-led Hindutva regime on August 5, 2019, revoked Article 370 that granted special status to the internationally recognized disputed territory and imposed a brutal military siege. Radio Pakistan and Pakistan Television will also air special programmes to highlight the Kashmiris struggle and expose Indian illegal actions on August 5, 2019.

Khaqan, Bhootani 'among...'

FROM PAGE 01

setup. Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam Fazl (JUI-F) chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman, Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto, and other senior leaders attended the huddle. Balochistan National Party Chairman Akhtar Mengal, Jamhoori Wattan Party (JWP) leader Shahzain Bugti, Muttahida Quami Movement-Pakistan (MQM) leader Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui, Bhootani, and National Democratic Movement (NDM) Chairman Mohsin Dawar were also present during the meeting. In the meeting, various names were considered for caretaker prime minister, sources said. However, the coalition parties have decided to continue further consultation, they said, adding that the meeting of the coalition parties will be held again. The names of Abbasi, Hafeez Sheikh, and others were considered in the meeting as candidates for the interim PM slot. The leaders of the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) held back-to-back meetings, but no decision has been taken so far in this regard. At a dinner reception on Thursday, Prime Minister Shabbaz Sharif revealed to the allied that the National Assembly will be dissolved prematurely on August 9 — three days before its term.

National Aerospace...

FROM PAGE 01

The PM said public and private sector, international companies, Ministry of Information Technology all have joined hands for the project. He appreciated and felicitated the Air Chief Marshal Zaeher ud Din Babar for the remarkable project. Federal Ministers, Services chiefs and senior civil and military officials attended the event.

Briefs

Dozen missing in India after Himalayan landslide

NEW DELHI: At least a dozen people are reported missing after a landslide due to monsoon rains in a Himalayan Indian state, officials said on Friday.

The landslide took place in the Gaurikund area of Rudraprayag in the Uttarakhand state on Thursday night, on the route leading to the Hindu shrine of Kedarnath. "There are reports of 13-14 people missing. The rescue operation is underway and so far we haven't located them. Search and rescue operations are going on," Vishakha Ashok, the Rudraprayag district police chief, told Anadolu over the phone. She said the area is also seeing heavy rainfall. Nandan Singh Rajwar, a disaster management official in the district, told Anadolu that the landslide took place on Thursday at midnight. "Some shops were in the area, and they also suffered damage," he said. Pushkar Singh Dhami, Uttarakhand's chief minister, said due to heavy rains, landslides have caused damage to both people and property in Gaurikund. "The team of disaster management and district administration is fully engaged in relief and rescue work. The government stands completely with the disaster victims," he wrote on the X platform, formerly Twitter.—APP

Tate released from house arrest by Bucharest court

BUCHAREST: A Romanian court has ordered the release from house arrest of the self-proclaimed misogynist Andrew Tate, who is awaiting trial on charges of human trafficking.

The court has placed Tate, a social media personality known for expressing misogynistic views, under judicial control, a less restrictive measure. The Bucharest court of appeals said in a written ruling that it "replaces the house arrest measure with that of judicial control for a period of 60 days from August 4 until October 2". Tate and his brother Tristan, both of whom have dual US and British citizenship, were charged in June along with two Romanian female suspects of human trafficking, rape and forming a criminal gang to sexually exploit women. The suspects have denied the allegations. Under the new measure, the four suspects can leave the house, but not Bucharest and the surrounding Ilfov county. They must check in regularly with the police. They are also banned from trying to approach the alleged victims.—APP

Turkiye seize thousands of weapons from PKK

ANKARA: A large cache of weapons and ammunition belonging to the terrorist group PKK was seized across the border at hide-outs in northern Iraq, Türkiye's National Defense Ministry announced on Friday. In a statement, the ministry said a search and sweep operation in northern Iraq had resulted in the seizure of 10,800 pieces of AK-47 ammunition, 720 pieces of 7.62 mm PKMS machine gun ammunition, 120 pieces of DShK heavy machine gun ammunition, and 11 DShK heavy machine gun barrels. Turkish security forces also seized eight hand grenades, one DShK heavy machine gun tripod, two DShK heavy machine gun bodies, and one DShK heavy machine gun control handle, as well as four AK-47 infantry rifle buttstocks. PKK terrorists often hide out at bases in northern Iraq and plot terror attacks in Türkiye.

In its more than 35-year terror campaign against Türkiye, the PKK - listed as a terrorist organisation by Türkiye, the US, and EU - has been responsible for the deaths of more than 40,000 people, including women, children, and infants.—DNA

Alvi urges business community to help uplift deprived segments

Dr. Arif Alvi said that South Korea adopted the economic plan of Dr. Mehboob ul Haq and achieved fast economic growth, but Pakistan could not take benefit of it

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Dr. Arif Alvi, President of Pakistan has urged that the key issues of the business community should be addressed to facilitate them in business promotion that would help revive the economy. He said that weak decision making as a nation has deprived Pakistan from realizing its actual economic potential. He said this while addressing as Chief Guest the ICCI Vice Presidents Awards Ceremony held at Aiwan-e-Sadr, Islamabad.

Dr. Arif Alvi said that South Korea adopted the economic plan of Dr. Mehboob ul Haq and achieved fast economic growth, but Pakistan could not take benefit of it. He urged the business community to play a role for uplifting the deprived segments of the society and economic empowerment of women. He further said that 20.7 million children in Pakistan



were out of school and emphasized that the business community should play a role to bring them to schools to make them productive citizens of the country. He said that investment in employable sectors of the economy would create more jobs and reduce poverty. He said that the private sector should provide jobs to the persons with disabilities to engage them in productive activities. Speaking on the occasion, Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari,

President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry said that the former Vice Presidents ICCI have rendered useful services for the business community and the purpose of organizing the award ceremony was to acknowledge their role. He stressed that the government should give awards to highest taxpayers to acknowledge their role. He said that instead of putting more burden on the existing taxpayers, the government should

reduce high tax rates and expand taxbase to improve tax revenue. He said that the IT, export-oriented and tourism sectors should be given more focus to improve exports and tourism. He said that the President of Pakistan should play a role in the signing of a charter of economy by all the political parties to ensure consistency in economic policies. He said that ICCI is striving for a new industrial zone and expo center in

Islamabad and stressed that the government should cooperate in materialization of these projects. Engr. Azhar ul Islam Zafar, Vice President ICCI highlighted the issues of real estate sector and small traders. He stressed that the government should rationalize taxes on the real estate sector to save it from further troubles and provide easy loans on low markup to small traders. He said that the CDA should allocate a quota of plots for

small traders to address their housing issues. Dr. Arif Alvi, President of Pakistan distributed awards amongst the former Vice Presidents of ICCI on the occasion. The award recipients included Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, Engr. Azhar ul Islam Zafar, Yasar Sakhi Butt, Khalid Chaudhry, Faheem Khan, Abdul Rahman Khan, Saifur Rahman Khan, Iftikhar Anwar Sethi, Nisar Mirza, Tahir Ayub, Sheikh Abdul Waheed, Ashfaq Chatta, Mirza Muhammad Ali, Shahid Zaman Shinwari, Syed Adil Anees, Ishtiaq Qureshi, Abdul Ghaffar Chaudhry, Sohail Rabbani, Musharraf Janjua, Hamid Miraj, Qazi Muhammad Ilyas, Rab Nawaz Malik, Chaudhry Gulrez Shahid, Ahsan Bin Arif, Ch. Zahid Rafiq, Malik Muhammad Shabbir, Muhammad Sakhi Butt (Late), Raza Khan (Late), Faiz Ahmad Faizi (Late), Muhammad Hussain and Khurshid Ahmad Qureshi.

Australia drops China barley case at WTO

SYDNEY: Australia on Friday said it would drop a case against China at the World Trade Organisation after Beijing lifted hefty tariffs on the country's barley exports. "We welcome this outcome, which paves the way for our barley exporters to re-enter the Chinese market - benefiting Australian producers and Chinese consumers," Foreign Minister Penny Wong said in a statement.

China imposed tariffs on key Australian exports such as barley, beef, and wine in 2020, flexing its economic muscle at the height of a bitter dispute with Australia's former conservative government.

Australia retaliated by launching a case with the WTO, which was paused earlier this year as the countries' trade ministers stepped up negotiations. Canberra is now urging Beijing to drop trade barriers hindering the export of Australian wine, which is the subject of a separate WTO complaint.—Agencies

China to remove tariffs on Australian barley as ties improve

BEIJING: China said Friday it will remove extra tariffs on Australian barley, in the latest thawing of ties between the two after years of tensions.

Beijing imposed hefty levies on key Australian exports such as barley, beef and wine in 2020, leveraging its economic muscle at the height of a bitter dispute with the then-conservative government.

It also stopped imports of some of Australia's most significant commodities, including coal, which curbed billions of dollars in trade. But on Friday, China's commerce ministry said it was "no longer necessary to continue to impose anti-dumping duties and countervailing duties on imports of barley originating in Australia in view of changes in the Chinese barley market". In turn, Australia said it would drop a retaliatory case against the world's second-biggest economy at the World Trade Organisation, which was paused earlier this year as the countries' trade ministers stepped up negotiations.—APP

Lebanon mourns Beirut Port blast victims

Lebanon on Friday mourned those killed in the port blast that devastated Beirut three years ago as religious leaders and rights groups decried the lack of accountability among political leaders who stymied the official investigation.

The explosion killed at least 220 people and wounded thousands more when hundreds of tonnes of ammonium nitrate stored in a warehouse detonated just after 6 p.m. (1600 GMT) on August 4, 2020, sending a huge cloud over the city. Despite the devastation, no senior figures have been held to account and an investigation has been obstructed by legal measures, prompting outrage in Lebanon and abroad. Survivors and the families of victims say the lack of accountability has kept them stuck in 2020.

Rita Hitti lost her 26-year-old son, 34-year-old brother-in-law and 21-year-old nephew - all firefighters who responded to the call about a fire at the port on August 4 and were killed when the blast went off. "They were at the prime of their lives. Their lives were cut short - and we died along with them," she told Reuters. Many shops and restaurants obliterated by the blast have been painstakingly rebuilt, hosting an influx of tourists and Lebanese expatriates late into Thursday night. But on Friday, the usually-bustling streets were empty and businesses shuttered to mark a national day of mourning. Rights group Amnesty International said it was unacceptable that no one has been held responsible for the tragedy. "Instead, the authorities have used every tool at their disposal to shamelessly undermine and obstruct the domestic investigation to shield themselves from accountability - and perpetuate the culture of impunity in the country.—DNA

Niger's warns of 'devastating' fallout if coup succeeds

KHARTOUM: Niger's ousted President Mohamed Bazoum has called on the international community to return his government to power, warning of "devastating" consequences for the world if the coup against him succeeds.

In an op-ed in the Washington Post, Bazoum, who was deposed last week by the military, said the United States and the rest of the international community must help his country "restore our constitutional order". "This coup, launched against my government by a faction in the military on July 26, has no justification whatsoever," Bazoum said in the column published on Thursday.

"If it succeeds, it will have devastating consequences for our country, our region and the entire world," Bazoum, one of a dwindling number of pro-Western leaders in Africa, said the West African country has been a beacon of hope in a region plagued with violent extremism. "In Africa's troubled Sahel region, Niger stands as the last

Junta cancels military coop agreements with France

JOHANNESBURG: The junta in Niger late Thursday overturned several military cooperation agreements with France, putting the fate of its former colonial master's military base in the West African country up in the air. Amadou Abdramane, a spokesperson for the National Council for the Safeguarding of the Country, read out a statement on national television revoking five military cooperation agreements with France, one dating back to 1977. A group of soldiers calling themselves the National Council for the Safeguarding of the Country delivered a statement on Nigerien state television on July 26, shortly after detaining President Mohamed Bazoum, and said they took the step due to the "deteriorating security situation and bad governance." Commentators say the announcement did not come as a surprise as earlier on Thursday anti-France demonstrators gathered outside the French Embassy. Late Thursday, the junta suspended operations of two state-owned French international media outlets in the country, France 24 Television and Radio France Internationale (RFI). France has a major military base in Niger with about 1000-1500 troops which plays a crucial role in France's operations in the troubled Sahel region, fighting militants affiliated with Daesh/ISIS and al-Qaeda. The French base in Niger had gained more importance for France after it withdrew from neighboring Mali and Burkina Faso. Under the leadership of ousted President Bazoum, Niger was France's last remaining ally in the Sahel region in the war against terror. The French government is yet to respond to the junta's decision to cancel military pacts. —Agencies

bastion of respect for human rights amid the authoritarian movements that have overtaken some of our neighbours," Bazoum said. The entire Sahel region could fall to Russian influence via the Wagner Group, whose brutal terrorism has been on full display in

Ukraine," Bazoum added. Niger, which gained its independence from France in 1960, has been viewed as one of the reliable partners of the West in fighting extremist groups in Africa's Sahel region. The West African country, which borders seven

countries including Libya, Chad and Nigeria, is the largest recipient of US military assistance in the region, having received an estimated \$500m since 2012. Niger also hosts more than 2,000 Western troops, mostly from the US and France.—Agencies

US orders partial evacuation of embassy in Niger

Bazoum was overthrown on July 26 when members of his own guard detained him at the presidency

WASHINGTON: The United States on Wednesday ordered a partial evacuation of its embassy in Niger, the State Department said, a week after the fragile nation was rocked by a coup. "On August 2, 2023, the Department ordered the departure of non-emergency U.S. government employees and eligible family members from Embassy Niamey," an updated US travel advisory for Niger said. The advisory warned US citizens "not to travel to Niger," but stopped short of advising all Americans to leave the landlocked African country. "The U.S. Embassy in Niamey has temporarily reduced its personnel, suspended routine services, and is only able to provide emergency assistance to U.S. citizens in Niger," the advisory added. The United States has strongly condemned the overthrow of President Mohamed Bazoum but, unlike France and other European countries, did not order evacuations or suspend its aid to Niger, which is worth several hundred million dollars. "The United States rejects all efforts to overturn Niger's constitutional order, and stands with the people of Niger ... in support of democratic governance and respect for the rule of law and human rights," State Department spokesman Matthew Miller said in a statement late Wednesday. He added that the US remains "diplomatically engaged at the highest levels." Earlier, he told a State Department briefing that there was no indication of threats targeting Americans in Niger or American facilities such as the embassy, saying that the situation in Niamey was "calm" and "fluid." About 1,000 US troops are stationed in Niger, where they were helping the ousted president, Mohamed Bazoum, combat a regional Islamist insurgency. Bazoum was overthrown on July 26 when members of his own guard detained him at the presidency.—DNA

Ethiopia declares 'state of emergency' in Amhara region

ADIS ABABA: Ethiopia's federal government has declared a "state of emergency" following an escalation of violence in the northern region of Amhara, the office of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed said. "It has become necessary to declare a state of emergency as a situation has emerged where it has become difficult to control this unacceptable movement under current law," it said in a statement posted on social media on Friday. The statement did not make clear if the state of emergency applied nationwide or just to Amhara, which lies to the north of the capital Addis Ababa. Abiy's government did not reply immediately to questions from AFP news agency. Clashes in Amhara between the national army and local fighters have escalated in recent weeks, prompting travel warnings from foreign governments and the cancellation of flights by the national carrier Ethiopian Airlines. Tensions have been rising since April when the federal government announced it was dismantling regional forces including in Amhara, where nationalists felt the move would weaken Ethiopia's second most populous region.—Agencies

Poland building largest land army in EU

WARSAW: Poland is building the largest land army in the EU, said the head of Poland's ruling party on Friday. "Do not lecture those who are building the most powerful land army in the EU," Jaroslaw Kaczynski, head of the Law and Justice (PiS) party, told Polish news agency PAP, seeking to rebuff former Prime Minister Donald Tusk, who now leads the opposition Civic Platform (PO). Poland has committed to at least 3% of its GDP spending on defense and has already signed large contracts with contractors from the US and South Korea. With parliamentary elections coming this fall, Tusk recently accused the

ruling party of planning to suspend democracy due to tensions on Poland's eastern border with Belarus. Kaczynski also downplayed a Tuesday incident in which two Belarusian helicopters allegedly violated Polish airspace. "It was a very short provocation. And only someone extremely stupid could fall for it, that is, to shoot real missiles at the helicopter. Of course, (Russian President Vladimir) Putin and (Belarus' President Alexander) Lukashenko would be happy about that," Kaczynski said. "They are helpless. They know that we are in NATO, we have strengthened protection of the border and

we will not allow a return to the doctrine from the times of the Tusk government, about defending Poland on the Vistula line," Kaczynski said, referring to a military doctrine that placed Polish defense further west along the Vistula River. The Defense Ministry on Tuesday said that two Belarusian helicopters had violated Polish airspace near the village of Bialowieza. Belarus denied the claim, saying the helicopters were about 2 kilometers (1.24 miles) from the border. Marcin Wojciechowski, Poland's charge d'affaires in the capital Minsk, was called on Thursday by Belarus' Foreign Minis-

try to explain the alleged incursion. According to the Belarusian news service BelTA, the ministry urged Poland not to escalate the situation or use it to justify a buildup of its troops along the border. After members of the Wagner Group went to Belarus following their failed revolt, Poland has said many went to the Polish border, and warned this might be a precursor to hybrid warfare. As a NATO member bordering both Ukraine and Belarus, Russia's main ally in its war against Ukraine, Poland occupies a tense space between NATO and Russian-allied countries.—APP

Kashmir: A bleeding Paradise

QAMAR BASHIR

ON August 5, 2019, the Indian government repealed Article 370, which prohibited the Indian Parliament from applying certain laws to Jammu and Kashmir without the state's consent, as well as Article 35A, which empowered the Jammu and Kashmir state legislature to define and grant special rights and privileges to "permanent residents" of the state. This illegal, unethical, and unconstitutional decision precipitated a massive political and security crisis in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJ&K), resulting in a five-year-long brutal military siege in which communications

were cut off, restrictions on freedom of movement were imposed, and people were denied easy access to food, medicine, and other critical supplies. The use of extreme tactics such as arbitrary detentions, torture, and extrajudicial killings has degraded Kashmiris' fundamental rights. Businesses have been shut down, schools have been closed, and healthcare facilities have been disrupted. People are unable to communicate with their families and friends, and the occupying forces have recently begun using disturbing and inhuman tactics that have never been used in many other conflict zones, such as refusing to return the bodies of martyred civilians to their families, deny-

ing them funerals, and denying their families the ability to fulfill their religious obligations. The deployment of over one million heavily armed troops over a civilian population of only 12 million which is even far less than the population of Karachi has turned IIOJ&K into the most militarized Zone of the world having no parallel in the current world history. This equates to one soldier for every ten civilian Kashmiris. There is only one comparable case of Palestine, which has been under Israeli blockade since 1967, but it is likewise dwarfed when compared to IIOJ&K. On a combined population of 5 million, Israel has stationed roughly 60,000 troops

in the West Bank and 15,000 in the Gaza Strip, resulting in one soldier for every 83 civilians, compared to one soldier for every ten civilians in IIOJ&K. This high level of militarization wreaked havoc on the lives of the people who reside there. The forces are frequently viewed as an occupying force, and their presence has resulted in extensive human rights violations including as arbitrary detentions, torture, and extrajudicial killings, in addition to wreaking havoc on the economy and infrastructure. The Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED), a research project that collects data on political violence around the world, ranks the Kashmir

conflict as High Intensity. The Indian government has put a number of limitations on freedom of movement in Kashmir, including a curfew and a ban on travel between regions. For reporting on sensitive themes, journalists have been arrested, detained, and harassed. The government has banned the coverage of public gatherings and their reporting on social media. Journalists have been arrested and incarcerated for reporting on sensitive themes under the Armed Forces (Jammu and Kashmir) Special Powers Act (AFSPA). The rise of violence against the civilian Kashmiri people, particularly after August 5, 2019, has been widely condemned.

Briefs

Extreme heat hits Iraq, as temperatures exceed 50

DNA

BAGHDAD: Extreme temperatures and a lack of electrical power are a deadly combination, and one that is being felt across Iraq. The country is one of the world's most vulnerable to climate change, faced with scorching heatwaves, reduced rainfall, water scarcity, and desertification. At the emergency department of the Al-Ramadi Teaching Hospital, in Iraq's Anbar province, DrZiad Tariq says he receives at least 10 to 15 patients daily suffering from heat stroke and dehydration during the summer. "A cleaner working outdoors in Ramadi under these conditions was admitted to us last year with heat stroke," Tariq told Al Jazeera on a short break during a busy shift, as the temperature outside peaked at about 45 degrees Celsius (113 degrees Fahrenheit). "We admitted him to the ICU because he lost consciousness, but he died shortly after." Outside, the neurosurgeon added, young men are diving into the Euphrates River in an attempt to keep cool from the scorching heat. Most women, he said, stay at home to avoid the blaze of the sun. But this does not necessarily ensure protection from the temperature. "When there is no electricity, people will get into their cars to use the air conditioner."

India's SC suspends Gandhi's defamation conviction

WEB DESK

NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court of India has suspended opposition Congress party leader Rahul Gandhi's conviction in a defamation case, an order that will allow him to return to parliament and contest national elections due next year. Gandhi was convicted in March in a case brought by Purnesh Modi, a legislator from the western state of Gujarat belonging to the ruling BJP, over comments he made in 2019 when he asked why "all thieves have Modi as [their] common surname". Gandhi had then referred to three well-known and unrelated Modis in the speech: a fugitive Indian diamond tycoon, a cricket executive banned from the Indian Premier League (IPL), and the prime minister. But the remarks were deemed insulting to Prime Minister Narendra Modi and other people surnamed Modi, including the BJP legislator.

Mosques shut after religious riots near India's capital

DNA

NEW DELHI: Most mosques were shut for Friday prayers in an important business hub on the outskirts of India's capital after six people were killed in sectarian riots. Police were deployed in large numbers outside several mosques in Gurugram – a satellite city of New Delhi and a key business centre where Nokia, Samsung and other multinationals have their Indian headquarters. Tensions have been high in the area since Monday when mobs hurled stones at a Hindu religious procession and set cars alight in the predominantly Muslim district of Nuh nearby. An armed mob then attacked a mosque in Gurugram on early Tuesday, killing a cleric in apparent retaliation, while several shops and small restaurants were vandalised or torched by mobs chanting Hindu religious slogans. No major instances of violence have been reported since Tuesday night. Some mosques in Gurugram did allow small groups to assemble for Friday afternoon prayers – the most important of the week for Muslims.



ISLAMABAD: Ahead of 'Youm-e-Istehsal' on 5 August 2023, the Foreign Secretary briefed the Islamabad-based diplomatic missions on the latest developments in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir. He highlighted the legal, security and human rights dimensions of the situation in IIOJK. – DNA



Ukrainian drones hit key Russian port, damage ship

Moscow says it repels the attack on the port of Novorossiysk, which has a naval base, shipbuilding yards and an oil terminal

KYIV: Ukrainian sea drones have attacked a key Russian port on the Black Sea, damaging a naval ship, according to a Ukrainian official, speaking about the latest in a series of strikes inside Russia after Kyiv promised to bring the fight home to the Kremlin. Moscow said it repelled Friday's attack on Novorossiysk, which marked the first time a commercial Russian port has been targeted in the 18-month war. OlenegorskyGornyyak, a landing ship, suffered a serious breach in the attack, carried out by Ukraine's navy and security service, according to a security service official. As a result, the ship is unable to carry out its combat missions, said the official who spoke on the condition of anonymity because he was not authorised to give the information to the media. Ukrainian news agencies carried footage from social media channels that they suggested showed the OlenegorskyGornyyak listing to one side. The ship is designed to

transport troops and heavy equipment and was sent for repairs in 2014, according to Russian media reports. It is normally based with Russia's Northern Fleet in the Arctic. Russia, however, said it fended off the attack on Novorossiysk, saying ships patrolling the perimeter of the naval base, including the OlenegorskyGornyyak, destroyed two sea drones. The Caspian Pipeline Consortium, which operates an oil terminal in the port, said maritime traffic was halted for a few hours but its facilities were not damaged. The regional governor said there were no casualties. Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov refused to comment on the attack during a conference call with reporters. Footage published on Russian social media channels appeared to show a ship firing into the sea and a burning object exploding. Ukrainian social media channels also posted nighttime video shot from what they

indicated was a sea drone, floating near a ship. Friday's attack is the latest in a string of assaults by Ukraine inside Russian territory. This week, drones hit a building in Moscow, and in May, two drones struck the Kremlin but caused little damage. The port assault was carried out as the Black Sea has become an increasingly important battleground since Russia's withdrawal from a deal that had allowed Ukrainian grain shipments across the sea. Since scrapping the deal, Russia has hammered Ukraine's ports, compounding a blow to food supplies worldwide. On Wednesday, Russian drones caused significant damage and a large fire at facilities in the Odesa region that are key to Ukrainian grain exports. A day earlier, the Russian military said Kyiv's forces tried to attack two patrol vessels in the sea, southwest of the Russian-controlled city of Sevastopol on the annexed Crimean Peninsula. Shortly after Russia invaded, Ukraine said

it sunk the flagship of Russia's Black Sea fleet, the Moskva. Ukraine said it hit the Moskva, a guided-missile cruiser, with missiles in a devastating symbolic blow to Russia. The Russian defence ministry said the heavily damaged Moskva sank in a storm under tow after being gutted by fire. It previously said a fire set off some of its weapons and forced the crew to evacuate. It denied there had been an attack by Ukraine on the ship. Minutes after confirming the attack on the Black Sea port on Friday morning, Russia's defence ministry said it had also repelled another attack by Ukraine on Crimea. The defence ministry said air defence systems shot down 10 drones and it had electronically jammed another three. Videos shared on Russian social media channels reportedly from around the city of Feodosia in Crimea showed what appeared to be air defence systems working as well as loud explosions. – Agencies

Russian court hands Navalny new 19-year sentence

DNA

MOSCOW: Imprisoned Russian opposition leader Alexey Navalny has been sentenced to 19 more years in jail on extremism charges which he has dismissed as an attempt to silence him. The prosecution had demanded a 20-year prison sentence, and the politician himself said that he expected a lengthy, "Stalinist" term. Friday's verdict marked his fifth criminal conviction; the sentence is the longest of the three he has been handed. Navalny appeared before the judge wearing his prison uniform, smiling and speaking with another defendant. He is already serving a nine-year sentence for fraud and contempt of court in a penal colony east of Moscow. In 2021, he was also sentenced to 2.5 years in prison for a parole violation. The latest trial against Navalny has been taking place behind closed doors in the colony where he is imprisoned. Marie Struthers, Amnesty International's Director for Eastern Europe and Central Asia, decried the sentence as "a sinister act of political vengeance that not only targets Navalny personally but serves as a warning to state critics across the country".

Senate approves bill for counter financing authority

ISLAMABAD: Senate Friday approved a bill establishing counter-financing authority, seeking to keep Pakistan off the Financial Action Task Force's (FATF) grey list. The bill titled 'National Anti-Money Laundering and Counter Financing of Terrorism Authority Bill' was approved with 28 for and eight against, with strong sloganeering from the opposition benches. Not only did the opposition parties – Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) and the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) – express concerns, but ruling parties' lawmakers Raza Rabbani, Tahir Bizenjo, and Kamran Murtaza also opposed it. They maintained that hasty legislation would have far-reaching effects and demanded that lawmakers be given time to review the bills. In her defence, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Hina Rabbani Khar – who moved the bill in the upper house – said the bill has already been approved in the National Assembly. "Under this bill, we will establish an authority [to counter terror financing]," she said, with Pakistan Peoples Party leader Yousaf Raza Gillani saying the legislation was of crucial importance. Minister for Finance and Revenue Ishaq Dar told the house that the federal government had given the FATF its future plan when it removed Pakistan from its grey list – on ways to counter terror financing. Pakistan was listed in 2018 because of "strategic counter-terrorist financing-related deficiencies". After the government took seriously legislated, the international money laundering watchdog removed the nation from the grey list that warrants increased surveillance for terrorism financing. PTI Senator Mohsin Aziz said it is impossible for lawmakers to read 12 bills in a day and demanded that they "not be made a rubber stamp legislature". "The entire world is making fun of us," he said. In her speech on the floor of the National Assembly a day earlier, the state minister said the legislation was of immense importance and, if properly enforced and implemented, it would make sure that Pakistan did not see the FATF grey list again. – DNA

Trump pleads not guilty of plotting to overturn election loss

NEWS DESK

FLORIDA: Donald Trump pleaded not guilty on Thursday to charges he orchestrated a plot to try to overturn his 2020 election loss in what US prosecutors call an unprecedented effort by the then-president to undermine the pillars of American democracy. Special Counsel Jack Smith, who has overseen the federal investigation, looked on from the courtroom's front row as Trump entered his plea before US Magistrate Judge MoxilaUpadhyaya. "Not guilty," Trump said, emphasising the first word. The arraignment, lasting about half an hour, took place in a Washington courthouse half a mile (1 km) from the US Capitol, the building Trump's supporters stormed on January 6, 2021, to try to stop Congress from certifying his defeat. It was the third time Trump has pleaded not guilty since April, with months of pre-trial legal wrangling expected against the backdrop of the 2024 presidential cam-

campaign, in which Trump is the front-runner for the Republican nomination to take on Democratic President Joe Biden. In a 45-page indictment on Tuesday, Smith accused Trump and his allies of promoting false claims the election was rigged, pressuring state and federal officials to alter the results and assembling fake slates of electors to try to wrest electoral votes from Biden. Trump, 77, faces four counts, including conspiracy to defraud the US, to deprive citizens of their voting rights and to obstruct an official proceeding. The most serious charge carries a maximum prison sentence of 20 years. The next court date in the case will be Aug. 28 before US District Judge Tanya Chutkan, though Upadhyaya said Trump would not be required to attend. Chutkan intends to set a trial date at that time, Upadhyaya said. Trump's lawyer, John Lauro, registered an early objection, arguing that the magnitude of the case and the amount of materials involved could require a lot of time. Prosecutor Thomas Windom countered that case should proceed as normal, including with a speedy trial.

Poles defiant as Wagner operates near border

WEB DESK

WARSAW: "Extremely dangerous" – that is how Poland's Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki described the Russian private mercenary group Wagner on Thursday at a meeting with Lithuanian President GitanasNausėda in northeastern Poland. Since last week, Poland's leaders have taken significant steps to focus NATO's attention on the apparent threat Wagner poses to Poland after the group relocated to bases in Belarus and trained right next to the Polish border. Morawiecki has said that more than 100 Wagner fighters have moved close to the strategic Suwalki Gap area of Poland and Lithuania and claimed that they could secretly enter the European Union disguised as migrants. At the Thursday meeting, Morawiecki said that Wagner's presence would lead to increased provocations against Poland, several days after two Belarusian helicopters breached Poland's air space.

Quran burnings: Denmark beefs up borders security

Danish Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen late Thursday said religious texts should not be burned. "I think it would be wrong if someone stood there and burned the Bible. I also don't think we should burn the Torah for the sake of those who belong to the Jewish faith," Frederiksen told broadcaster DR

STOCKHOLM: After consecutive incidents of Quran desecration that instigated tensions within the country, Denmark's government said Friday it was taking steps to boost its domestic security and bar unwanted individuals from entering its territory. The decision comes days after a similar unholy incident in Sweden. Officials in Denmark are fearing retaliation and revenge after anti-Islam activists in the country and Sweden desecrated and damaged several copies of the Holy Quran in recent months, sparking a fierce backlash from the Muslim world with demands on banning such acts.

"Authorities have today concluded that it is necessary at this time to increase the focus on who is entering Denmark, in order to respond to the specific and current threats," the Danish justice ministry said in a statement late Thursday. Passengers arriving at Copenhagen Airport, even from within Europe's free-movement Schengen area, will face greater scrutiny in the form of random checks, police said. Travellers coming from Sweden by train or car should also expect more checks, while Denmark's southern border with Germany will see an increase in

patrols. A small group of Danish far-right activists has burned at least ten copies of the Quran in the past week and said it plans to desecrate more at two demonstrations Friday and at three more events over the weekend. The Danish and Swedish governments have condemned the burnings and are considering new laws that could stop them. However, according to domestic critics, any such decisions would undermine the freedom of speech that is protected in their constitutions. Denmark's tighter border controls will initially be in place until

August 10. "The recent [Quran] burnings have, as the security police have said, affected the current security situation," Justice Minister Peter Hummelgaard said. The decision to tighten border controls follows a similar move by Sweden. Danish Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen late Thursday said religious texts should not be burned. "I think it would be wrong if someone stood there and burned the Bible. I also don't think we should burn the Torah for the sake of those who belong to the Jewish faith," Frederiksen told broadcaster DR. – Agencies